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MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUKE OF SAINT-SIMON

Madame de Montespan

Regency Edition

The Memoirs

OF THE

Duke of Saint-Simon

ON THE

REIGN OF LOUIS XIV. AND THE REGENCY

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH BY

BAYLE ST. JOHN

WITH A PREFACE BY

JAMES BRECK PERKINS

VOLUME IV.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

DUKE OF SAINT-SIMON

CHAPTER I.

Anecdote of the Duc d'Orléans—He Pretends to Reform—Trick Played upon Me—His Hoaxes—His Panegyric of Me—Madame de Sabran—How the Regent Treated His Mistresses.

I MUST not omit to mention an incident which occurred during the early part of the year 1718, and which will give some idea of the character of M. le Duc d'Orléans, already pretty amply described by me.

One day (when Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans had gone to Montmartre, which she quitted soon after) I was walking alone with M. le Duc d'Orléans in the little garden of the Palais Royal, chatting upon various affairs, when he suddenly interrupted me, and turning towards me, said, "I am going to tell you something that will please you."

Thereupon he related to me that he was tired of the life he led, which was no longer in harmony with his

age or his desires, and many similar things; that he was resolved to give up his gay parties, pass his evenings more soberly and decently, sometimes at home, often with Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans; that his health would gain thereby, and he should have more time for business; that in a little while I might rely upon it there would be no more suppers of "roués and harlots" (these were his own terms), and that he was going to lead a prudent and reasonable life adapted to his age and state.

I admit that in my extreme surprise I was ravished, so great was the interest I took in him. I testified this to him with overflowing heart, thanking him for his confidence. I said to him that he knew I for a long time had not spoken to him of the indecency of his life, or of the time he lost, because I saw that in so doing I lost my own; that I had long since despaired of his conduct changing; that this had much grieved me; that he could not be ignorant from all that had passed between us at various times, how much I desired a change, and that he might judge of the surprise and joy his announcement gave me. He assured me more and more that his resolution was fixed, and thereupon I took leave of him, the hour for his *soirée* having arrived.

The next day I learned from people to whom the roués had just related it, that M. le Duc d'Orléans was no sooner at table than he burst out laughing, and applauded his cleverness, saying that he had just laid a trap for me into which I had fallen full length. He recited to them our conversation, at which the joy and applause were marvellous. It is the only time he ever

diverted himself at my expense (not to say at his own) in a matter in which the fib he told me, and which I was foolish enough to swallow, surprised by a sudden joy that took from me reflection, did honour to me, though but little to him. I would not gratify him by telling him I knew of his joke, or call to his mind what he had said to me; accordingly he never dared to speak of it.

I never could unravel what fantasy had seized him to lead him to hoax me in this manner, since for many years I had never opened my mouth concerning the life he led, whilst he, on his side, had said not a word to me relating to it. Yet it is true that sometimes being alone with confidential valets, some complaints have escaped him (but never before others) that I ill-treated him, and spoke hastily to him, but all was said in two words, without bitterness, and without accusing me of treating him wrongfully. He spoke truly also; sometimes, when I was exasperated with stupidity or error in important matters which affected him or the State, or when he had agreed (having been persuaded and convinced by good reasons) to do or not to do some essential thing, and was completely turned from it by his feebleness, his easy-going nature (which he appreciated as well as I)—cruelly did I let out against him. But the trick he most frequently played me before others, one of which my warmth was always dupe, was suddenly to interrupt an important argument by a *sproposito* of buffoonery. I could not stand it; sometimes being so angry that I wished to leave the room. I used to say to him that if he wished to joke I would joke as much as he liked, but to mix the most serious

matters with tomfoolery was insupportable. He laughed heartily, and all the more because, as the thing often happened, I ought to have been on my guard; but never was, and was vexed both at the joke and at being surprised; then he returned to business. But princes must sometimes banter and amuse themselves with those whom they treat as friends. Nevertheless, in spite of his occasional banter, he entertained really sincere esteem and friendship for me.

By chance I learnt one day what he really thought of me. I will say it now, so as to leave at once all these trifles. M. le Duc d'Orléans returning one afternoon from the Regency Council at the Tuileries to the Palais Royal with M. le Duc de Chartres (his son) and the Bailli de Conflans (then first gentleman of his chamber) began to talk of me, passing an eulogium upon me I hardly dare to repeat. I know not what had occurred at the Council to occasion it. All that I can say is that he insisted upon his happiness in having a friend so faithful, so unchanging at all times, so useful to him as I was, and always had been; so sure, so true, so disinterested, so firm, such as he could meet with in no one else, and upon whom he could always count. This eulogy lasted from the Tuileries to the Palais Royal, the Regent saying to his son that he wished to teach him how to make my acquaintance, as a support and a source of happiness (all that I relate here is in his own words); such as he had always found in my friendship and counsel. The Bailli de Conflans, astonished at this abundant eloquence, repeated it to me two days after, and I admit that I never have forgotten it. And here I will say that whatever others might do,

whatever I myself (from disgust and vexation at what I saw ill done) might do, the Regent always sought reconciliation with me with shame, confidence, confusion, and he has never found himself in any perplexity that he has not opened his heart to me, and consulted me, without however always following my advice, for he was frequently turned from it by others.

He would never content himself with one mistress. He needed a variety in order to stimulate his taste. I had no more intercourse with them than with his roués. He never spoke of them to me, nor I to him. I scarcely ever knew anything of their adventures. His roués and valets were always eager to present fresh mistresses to him, from which he generally selected one. Amongst these was Madame de Sabran, who had married a man of high rank, but without wealth or merit, in order to be at liberty. There never was a woman so beautiful as she, or of a beauty more regular, more agreeable, more touching, or of a grander or nobler bearing, and yet without affectation. Her air and her manners were simple and natural, making you think she was ignorant of her beauty and of her figure (this last the finest in the world), and when it pleased her she was deceitfully modest. With much intellect she was insinuating, merry, overflowing, dissipated, not bad-hearted, charming, especially at table. In a word, she was all M. le Duc d'Orléans wanted, and soon became his mistress without prejudice to the rest.

As neither she nor her husband had a rap, they were ready for anything, and yet they did not make a large fortune. One of the chamberlains of the Regent, with an annual salary of six thousand livres, having received

another appointment, Madame de Sabran thought six thousand livres a year too good to be lost, and asked for the post for her husband. She cared so little for him, by the way, that she called him her "mastiff." It was she, who, supping with M. le Duc d'Orléans and his roués, wittily said, that princes and lackeys had been made of one material, separated by Providence at the creation from that out of which all other men had been made.

All the Regent's mistresses had one by one their turn. Fortunately they had little power, were not initiated into any state secrets, and received but little money.

The Regent amused himself with them, and treated them in other respects exactly as they deserved to be treated.

CHAPTER II.

Encroachments of the Parliament—The Money Edict—Conflict of Powers—Vigorous Conduct of the Parliament—Opposed with Equal Vigour by the Regent—Anecdote of the Duchesse du Maine—Further Proceedings of the Parliament—Influence of the Reading of Memoirs—Conduct of the Regent—My Political Attitude—Conversation with the Regent on the Subject of the Parliament—Proposal to Hang Law—Meeting at My House—Law Takes Refuge in the Palais Royal.

IT is time now that I should speak of matters of very great importance, which led to changes that filled my heart with excessive joy, such as it had never known before.

For a long time past the Parliament had made many encroachments upon the privileges belonging to the Dukes. Even under the late King it had begun these impudent enterprises, and no word was said against it; for nothing gave the King greater pleasure than to mix all ranks together in a caldron of confusion. He hated and feared the nobility, was jealous of their power, which in former reigns had often so successfully balanced that of the crown; he was glad therefore of any opportunity which presented itself that enabled

him to see our order weakened and robbed of its dignity.*

The Parliament grew bolder as its encroachments one by one succeeded. It began to fancy itself armed with powers of the highest kind. It began to imagine that it possessed all the authority of the English Parliament, forgetting that that assembly is charged with the legislative administration of the country, that it has the right to make laws and repeal laws, and that the monarch can do but little, comparatively speaking, without the support and sanction of this representative chamber; whereas, our own Parliament is but a tribunal of justice, with no control or influence over the royal authority or state affairs.

But, as I have said, success gave it new impudence. Now that the King was dead, at whose name alone it trembled, this assembly thought that a fine opportunity had come to give its power the rein. It had to do with a Regent, notorious for his easy-going disposition, his indifference to form and rule, his dislike to all vigorous measures. It fancied that victory over such

* Saint-Simon always lays more stress on the hierarchy of classes than on any other subject connected with politics. Everything concerning the rights and privileges of his order appears to him of terrific importance. As we have seen, had his opinions prevailed, he would have begun what he called Reform by depriving the middle classes of the privilege they were gradually acquiring of occupying political positions in the State, and putting all power once more in the hands of the aristocracy. It is necessary to bear this in mind in reading the characters he draws of members of the Court. Every one who interfered in the slightest degree with the privileges of the Dukes, appeared to him a villain. It is not necessary to judge between the Regent and the Parliament on the question of the money edict: for it is evident that Saint-Simon, who admits that he did not understand finance matters, is governed only by antipathy to a body which had done things annoying to his order. However, the Parliament *was* on the right side, and what it objected to was mere spoliation. The edict, says Saint-Simon, "*soulageait le roi d'autant de papier, et il gagnait gros à la refonte!*"

an opponent would be easy; that it could successfully overcome all the opposition he could put in action, and in due time make his authority secondary to its own. The Chief-President of the Parliament, I should observe, was the principal promoter of these sentiments. He was the bosom friend of M. and Madame du Maine, and by them was encouraged in his views. Incited by his encouragement, he seized an opportunity which presented itself now, to throw down the glove to M. le Duc d'Orléans, in the name of the Parliament, and to prepare for something like a struggle. The Parliament of Brittany had recently manifested a very turbulent spirit, and this was an additional encouragement to that of Paris.

At first the Parliament men scarcely knew what to lay hold of and bring forward, as an excuse for the battle. They wished of course to gain the applause of the people as protectors of their interests—likewise those who for their private ends try to trouble and embroil the State—but could not at first see their way clear. They sent for Trudaine, Prevôt des Marchands, Councillor of State, to give an account to them of the state of the Hôtel de Ville funds. He declared that they had never been so well paid, and that there was no cause of complaint against the government. Baffled upon this point, they fastened upon an edict, recently rendered, respecting the money of the realm. They deliberated thereon, deputed a commission to examine the matter, made a great fuss, and came to the conclusion that the edict would, if acted upon, be very prejudicial to the country.

Thus much done, the Parliament assembled anew on

Friday morning, the 17th of June, 1718, and again in the afternoon. At the end they decided upon sending a deputation to the Regent, asking him to suspend the operation of the edict, introduce into it the changes suggested by their body, and then send it to them to be registered. The deputation was sent, and said all it had to say.

On the morrow the Parliament again assembled, morning and afternoon, and sent a message to the Regent, saying, it would not separate until it had received his reply. That reply was very short and simple. The Regent sent word that he was tired of the meddling interference of the Parliament (this was not the first time, let me add, that he experienced it), that he had ordered all the troops in Paris, and round about, to hold themselves ready to march, and that the King must be obeyed. Such was in fact true. He had really ordered the soldiers to keep under arms and to be supplied with powder and shot.

The message did not intimidate the Parliament. The next day, Sunday, the Chief-President, accompanied by all the other presidents, and by several councillors, came to the Palais Royal. Although, as I have said, the leader of his company, and the right-hand man of M. and Madame du Maine, he wished for his own sake to keep on good terms with the Regent, and at the same time to preserve all authority over his brethren, so as to have them under his thumb. His discourse then to the Regent commenced with many praises and much flattery, in order to smooth the way for the three fine requests he wound up with. The first of these was that the edict should be sent to the

Parliament to be examined, and to suffer such changes as the members should think fit to introduce, and then be registered; the second, that the King should pay attention to their remonstrances in an affair of this importance, which they believed prejudicial to the State; the third, that the works recently undertaken at the Mint for recasting the specie should be suspended!

To these modest requests the Regent replied that the edict had been registered at the Cour des Monnaies, which is a superior court, and consequently sufficient for such registration; that there was only a single instance of an edict respecting the money of the realm having been sent before the Parliament, and then out of pure civility; that the matter had been well sifted, and all its inconveniences weighed; that it was to the advantage of the State to put in force this edict; that the works of the Mint could not be interfered with in any way; finally, that the King must be obeyed! It was quite true that the edict had been sent to the Parliament out of courtesy, but at the suggestion of the Regent's false and treacherous confidants, valets of the Parliament, such as the Maréchals de Villeroy, and Huxelles, and Besons, Canillac, Effiat, and Noailles.

Notwithstanding the decisive answer they had received, the Parliament met the very next day, and passed a decree against the edict. The council of the regency, at its sitting on the afternoon of the same day, abrogated this decree. Thus, since war was in a measure declared between the Regent's authority and that of the Parliament, the orders emanating from the one were disputed by the other, and *vice versa*. A nice game of shuttlecock this, which it was scarce likely could last long!

The Regent was determined to be obeyed. He prohibited, therefore, the printing and posting up of the decree of the Parliament. Soldiers of the guards, too, were placed in the markets to hinder the refusal of the new money which had been issued. The fact is, by the edict which had been passed, the louis worth thirty livres was taken at thirty-six livres, and the crown piece, worth a hundred sous, at six livres instead of five. By this edict also government notes were made legal tender until the new money should be ready. The finances were thus relieved, and the King gained largely from the recasting of the coin. But private people lost by this increase, which much exceeded the intrinsic value of the metal used, and which caused everything to rise in price. Thus the Parliament had a fine opportunity for trumpeting forth its solicitude for the public interest, and did not fail to avail itself of it.

During the night a councillor of the Parliament was surprised on horseback in the streets tearing down and disfiguring the decree of the Regency Council, which abrogated that of the Parliament. He was taken to prison.

On Monday, the 27th of June, the Chief-President, at the head of all the other presidents, and of forty councillors, went to the Tuileries, and in the presence of the Regent read the wire-drawn remonstrance of the Parliament upon this famous edict. The Keeper of the Seals said that in a few days the King would reply. Accordingly on Saturday, the 2nd of July, the same deputation came again to the Tuileries to hear the reply. The Regent and all the Princes of the blood were there,

the bastards also. Argenson, who from lieutenant of police had been made keeper of the seals, and who in his former capacity had often been ill-used—nay, even attacked by the Parliament—took good care to show his superiority over that assembly. He answered that deputation in the name of the King, and concluded by saying that the edict would in no way be altered, but would receive complete application. The parliamentary gentlemen did not expect so firm a reply, and withdrew, much mortified.

They were not, however, vanquished. They reassembled on the 11th and 12th of August, and spat forth all their venom in another decree specially aimed at the authority of the Regent. By this decree the administration of the finances was henceforth entirely to be at the mercy of the Parliament. Law, the Scotchman, who, under the favour of M. le Duc d'Orléans, had been allowed some influence over the State money matters, was to possess that influence no longer; in fact, all power on the part of the Regent over the finances was to be taken from him.

After this the Parliament had to take but one step in order to become the guardian of the King and the master of the realm (as in fact it madly claimed to be), the Regent more at its mercy than the King, and perhaps as exposed as King Charles I. of England. Our parliamentary gentlemen began as humbly as those of England, and though, as I have said, their assembly was but a simple court of justice, limited in its jurisdiction like the other courts of the realm, to judge disputes between private people, yet by dint of hammering upon the word parliament they believed themselves

not less important than their English brethren, who form the legislative assembly, and represent all the nation.

M. and Madame du Maine had done not a little to bring about these fancies, and they continued in secret to do more. Madame du Maine, it may be recollected, had said that she would throw the whole country into combustion, in order not to lose her husband's prerogative. She was as good as her word. Encouraged doubtless by the support they received from this precious pair, the Parliament continued on its mad career of impudent presumption, pride, and arrogance. It assembled on the 22nd of August, and ordered inquiry to be made of the Regent as to what had become of all the state notes that had been passed at the Chamber of Justice; those which had been given for the lotteries that were held every month; those which had been given for the Mississippi or Western Company; finally, those which had been taken to the Mint since the change in the specie.

These questions were communicated to the Regent by the King's officers. In reply he turned his back upon them, and went away into his cabinet, leaving these people slightly bewildered. Immediately after this occurrence it was rumoured that a Bed of Justice would soon be held. The Regent had not then thought of summoning such an important assembly, and his weakness and vacillation were such that no one thought he would dare to do so.

The memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, of Joly, of Madame Motteville, had turned all heads. These books had become so fashionable, that in no class was the

man or woman who did not have them continually in hand. Ambition, the desire for novelty, the skill of those who circulated these books, made the majority of people hope to cut a figure or make a fortune, and persuaded them there was as little lack of personages as in the last minority. People looked upon Law as the Mazarin of the day—(they were both foreign)—upon M. and Madame du Maine, as the chiefs of the Fronde; the weakness of M. le Duc d'Orléans was compared to that of the Queen-mother, and so on.

To say the truth, all tended towards whatever was extreme—moderation seemed forgotten—and it was high time the Regent aroused himself from a supineness which rendered him contemptible, and which emboldened his enemies and those of the State to brave all and undertake all. This lethargy, too, disheartened his servants, and made all healthy activity on their part impossible. It had at last led him to the very verge of the precipice, and the realm he governed to within an inch of the greatest confusion. He had need, indeed, to be up and doing!

The Regent, without having the horrible vice or the favourites of Henry III., had even more than that monarch become notorious for his daily debauches, his indecency, and his impiety. Like Henry III., too, he was betrayed by his most intimate councillors and domestics. This treachery pleased him (as it had pleased that King) because it induced him to keep idle, now from fear, now from interest, now from disdain, and now from policy. This torpor was agreeable to him because it was in conformity with his humour and his tastes, and because he regarded those who counselled

it as good, wise, and enlightened people, not blinded by their private interests, but seeing clearly things as they were; while he was importuned with opinions and explanations which would have disclosed the true state of affairs and suggested remedies.

He looked upon such people as offered these opinions and explanations as impetuous counsellors, who hurried everything and suggested everything, who wished to discount the future in order to satisfy their ambition, their aversion, their different passions. He kept on his guard against them; he applauded himself for not being their dupe. Now, he laughed at them; often he allowed them to believe he appreciated their reasoning, that he was going to act and rouse from his lethargy. He amused them thus, gained time, and diverted himself afterwards with the others. Sometimes he replied coldly to them, and when they pressed him too much he allowed his suspicions to peep out.

Long since I had perceived M. le Duc d'Orléans' mode of action. At the first movements of the Parliament, of the bastards, and of those who had usurped the name of nobility, I had warned him. I had done so again as soon as I saw the cadence and the harmony of the designs in progress. I had pointed out to him their inevitable sequel; how easy it was to hinder them at the commencement; how difficult after, especially for a person of his character and disposition. But I was not the man for such work as this. I was the oldest, the most attached, the freest spoken of all his servitors; I had given him the best proofs of this in the most critical times of his life, and in the midst of his universal abandonment; the counsels I had offered

him in these sad days he had always found for his good; he was accustomed to repose in me the most complete confidence; but, whatever opinion he might have of me, and of my truth and probity, he was on his guard against what he called my warmth, and against the love I had for my dignity,* so attacked by the usurpations of the bastards, the designs of the Parliament, and the modern fancies of a sham nobility. As soon as I perceived his suspicions I told him so, and I added that, content with having done my duty as citizen and as his servitor, I would say no more on the subject. I kept my word. For more than a year I had not of myself opened my mouth thereon. If he was sometimes spoken to before me, and I could not keep quite silent without being suspected of sulking or pique, I carelessly said something indefinite, with as little meaning in it as possible, and calculated to make us drop the subject.

Judge of my surprise, therefore, when as I was working as usual one afternoon with the Regent, he interrupted me to speak with bitterness of the Parliament. I replied with my accustomed coldness and pretended negligence, and continued my business. He stopped me, and said that he saw very well that I would not reply to him concerning the Parliament. I admitted it was true, and added that he must long since have perceived this. Pressed and pressed beyond measure, I coldly remarked that he could not but remember what I had said to him of the Parliament both before and after his accession to the regency, that other counsels

*The Regent evidently saw the weak point of Saint-Simon's character, and was "on his guard against" him on account of the importance he attached to the most wretched trifles.

had prevailed over mine, and that finding my opinions were misinterpreted by him, I had resolved to hold my tongue, and had done so. As the subject was now reopened I reminded him of a prophecy I had uttered long before, that he had missed the opportunity of governing the Parliament when he might have done so with a frown, and that step by step he would allow himself to be conducted by his easy-going disposition, until he found himself on the very verge of the abyss; that if he wished to recover his position he must begin at once to retrace his steps, or lose his footing for ever!

Such strong words (from my mouth they had been rare of late), pronounced with a slow, firm coldness, as though I were indifferent to the course he might adopt, made him feel how little capable I believed him of vigorous and sustained action, and what trifling trouble I took to make him adopt my views. Dubois, Argenson, and Law had also spoken to him, urging him to take strong measures against the Parliament; the effect of my speech was therefore marvellous.

It was indeed high time to do something, as I have before remarked. The Parliament, we found, after passing its last decree, had named a commission to inquire into the financial edict; this commission was working in the utmost secrecy; a number of witnesses had already been examined, and preparations were quietly making to arrest Law some fine morning, and hang him three hours after within the enclosure of the Palais de Justice.

Immediately this fact became known, the Duc de la Force and Fagon (Councillor of State) went to the Regent—'twas on the 19th of August, 1718—and spoke

to him with such effect, that he ordered them to assemble with Law that very day at my house in order to see what was to be done. They came, in fact, and this was the first intimation I had that the Regent had begun to feel the gravity of his position, and that he was ready to do something. In this conference at my house the firmness of Law, hitherto so great, was shaken so that tears escaped him. Arguments did not satisfy us at first, because the question could only be decided by force, and we could not rely upon that of the Regent. The safe-conduct with which Law was supplied would not have stopped the Parliament an instant. On every side we were embarrassed. Law, more dead than alive, knew not what to say; much less what to do. His safety appeared to us the most pressing matter to ensure. If he had been taken it would have been all over with him before the ordinary machinery of negotiation (delayed as it was likely to be by the weakness of the Regent) could have been set in motion; certainly, before there would have been leisure to think of better, or to send a regiment of guards to force open the Palais de Justice; a critical remedy at all times, and grievous to the last degree, even when it succeeds; frightful, if instead of Law, only his suspended corpse had been found!

I advised Law, therefore, to retire to the Palais Royal, and occupy the chamber of Nancré, his friend, then away in Spain. Law breathed again at this suggestion (approved by de la Force and Fagon), and put it in execution the moment he left my house. He might have been kept in safety at the Bank, but I thought the Palais Royal would be better: that his

retirement there would create more effect, and induce the Regent to hold firm to his purpose, besides allowing his Royal Highness to see the financier whenever he pleased.

CHAPTER III.

Proposed Bed of Justice — My Scheme — Interview with the Regent—The Necessary Seats for the Assembly—I Go in Search of Fontanieu—My Interview with Him—I Return to the Palace—Preparations—Proposal of M. le Duc to Degrade M. du Maine—My Opposition—My Joy and Delight—The Bed of Justice Finally Determined On—A Charming Messenger—Final Preparations—Illness of the Regent—News Given to M. du Maine—Resolution of the Parliament—Military Arrangements—I am Summoned to the Council—My Message to the Comte de Toulouse.

THIS done I proposed, and the others approved my proposition, that a Bed of Justice should be held as the only means left by which the abrogation of the parliamentary decrees could be registered. But while our arguments were moving, I stopped them all short by a reflection which came into my mind. I represented to my guests that the Duc du Maine was in secret the principal leader of the Parliament, and was closely allied with Maréchal de Villeroy; that both would oppose might and main the assembling of a Bed of Justice, so contrary to their views, to their schemes, to their projects; that to hinder it they as guardians of the young King, would plead on his behalf, the heat, which was in fact extreme, the fear of the crowd, of the fatigue,

of the bad air; that they would assume a pathetic tone in speaking of the King's health, calculated to embarrass the Regent; that if he persisted they would protest against everything which might happen to His Majesty; declare, perhaps, that in order not to share the blame, they would not accompany him; that the King, prepared by them, would grow frightened, perhaps, and would not go to the Parliament without them; that then all would be lost, and the powerlessness of the Regent, so clearly manifested, might rapidly lead to the most disastrous results.

These remarks stopped short our arguments, but I had not started objections without being prepared with a remedy for them. I said, "Let the Bed of Justice be held at the Tuileries; let it be kept a profound secret until the very morning it is to take place; and let those who are to attend it be told so only a few hours before they are to assemble. By these means no time will be allowed for anybody to object to the proceeding, to plead the health of the King, the heat of the weather, or to interfere with the arrangement of the troops which it will be necessary to make."

We stopped at this: Law went away, and I dictated to Fagon the full details of my scheme, by which secrecy was to be ensured and all obstacles provided against. We finished about nine o'clock in the evening, and I counselled Fagon to carry what he had written to the Abbé Dubois, who had just returned from England with new credit over the mind of his master.

The next day I repaired to the Palais Royal about four o'clock. A moment after La Vrillière came and relieved me of the company of Grancey and Broglio,

two roués, whom I had found in the grand cabinet, in the cool, familiarly, without wigs. When M. le Duc d'Orléans was free he led me into the cabinet, behind the grand salon, by the Rue de Richelieu, and on entering said he was at the crisis of his regency, and that everything was needed in order to sustain him on this occasion. He added that he was resolved to strike a heavy blow at the Parliament; that he much approved my proposition respecting the Bed of Justice at the Tuileries, and that it would be held exactly as I had suggested.

I was delighted at his animation, and at the firmness he appeared to possess, and after having well discussed with him all the inconveniences of my plan, and their remedy, we came at last to a very important matter, the mechanical means, so to speak, by which that plan was to be put in force. There was one thing to be provided for, which may appear an exceedingly insignificant matter, but which in truth was of no light importance. When a Bed of Justice is held, seats one above another must be provided for those who take part in it. No room in the Tuileries possessed such seats; and how erect them without noise, without exciting remarks, without causing inquiries and suspicions, which must inevitably lead to the discovery and perhaps thereby to the failure of our project? I had not forgotten this difficulty, however, and I said to the Regent I would go in secret to Fontanieu, who controlled the crown furniture, explain all to him, and arrange matters with him so that these seats should be erected at the very last moment, in time for our purpose, but too late to supply information that could be made use of to our enemies.

I hurried off accordingly, as soon as I could get away, in search of Fontanieu.

I had already had some relations with him, for he had married his daughter to the son of the sister of my brother-in-law, M. de Lauzun. I had done him some little service, and had therefore every reason to expect he would serve me on this occasion. Judge of my annoyance when upon reaching his house I learned that he had gone almost to the other end of the town, to the Marais, to conduct a suit at law, in which Monsieur and Madame de Lauzun were concerned, respecting an estate at Rondon they claimed!

The porter seeing me so vexed at being obliged to journey so far in search of Fontanieu, said, that if I would go and speak to Madame Fontanieu, he would see if his master was not still in the neighbourhood, at a place he intended to visit before going to the Marais. I acted upon this suggestion and went to Madame Fontanieu, whom I found alone. I was forced to talk to her of the suit of Monsieur and Madame de Lauzun, which I pretended was the business I came upon, and cruelly did I rack my brains to say enough to keep up the conversation. When Fontanieu arrived, for he was soon found, fortunately, I was thrown into another embarrassment, for I had all the pains in the world to get away from Madame Fontanieu, who, aided by her husband, begged me not to take the trouble to descend but to discuss the subject where I was. As she was as well informed upon the case as he, I thought once or twice I should never escape her. At last, however, I led away Fontanieu, by dint of compliments to his wife, in which I expressed my unwillingness to weary her with this affair.

When Fontanieu and I were alone down in his cabinet, I remained some moments talking to him upon the same subject, to allow the valets who had opened the doors for us time to retire. Then, to his great astonishment, I went outside to see if there were no listeners, and carefully closed the doors. After this I said to Fontanieu that I had not come concerning the affair of Madame de Lauzun, but upon another very different, which demanded all his industry, a secrecy proof against every trial, and which M. le Duc d'Orléans had charged me to communicate to him; but that before explaining myself he must know whether his Royal Highness could certainly count upon him.

It is strange what an impression the wildest absurdities leave if they are spread abroad with art. The first thing Fontanieu did was to tremble violently all over and become whiter than his shirt. With difficulty he stammered out a few words to the effect that he would do for M. le Duc d'Orléans as much as his duty would permit him to do. I smiled, looking fixedly at him, and this smile warned him apparently that he owed me an excuse for not being quite at ease upon any affair that passed through my hands; he directly made me one, at all events, and with the confusion of a man who sees that his first view has dazzled the second, and who, full of this first view, does not show anything, yet lets all be seen.

I reassured him as well as I could, and said that I had answered for him to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and afterwards that a Bed of Justice was wanted, for the construction of which we had need of him.

Scarcely had I explained this, than the poor fellow

began to take breath, as though escaping from stifling, oppression, or a painful operation for the stone, and asked me if that was what I wanted?

He promised everything, so glad was he to be let off thus cheaply, and in truth he kept to his word, both as to the secret and the work. He had never seen a Bed of Justice, and had not the slightest notion what it was like. I sat down on his bureau, and drew out the design of one. I dictated to him the explanations in the margin, because I did not wish them to be in my handwriting. I talked more than an hour with him; I disarranged his furniture, the better to show to him the order of the assembly, and explained to him what was to be done, so that all might be carried to the Tuileries and erected in a very few moments. When I found I had made everything sufficiently clear, and he had understood me, I returned to the Palais Royal as though recollecting something, being already in the streets, to deceive my people.

A servant awaited me at the top of the staircase, and the concierge of the Palais Royal at the door of M. le Duc d'Orléans' room, with orders to beg me to write. It was the sacred hour of the roués and the supper, at which all idea of business was banished. I wrote, therefore, to the Regent in his winter cabinet what I had just done, not without some little indignation that he could not give up his pleasure for an affair of this importance. I was obliged to beg the concierge not to give my note to M. le Duc d'Orléans unless he were in a state to read it and to burn it afterwards.

Our preparations for the Bed of Justice continued to be actively but silently made during the next few days.

In the course of the numberless discussions which arose upon the subject, it was agreed, after much opposition on my part, to strike a blow, not only at the Parliament, but at M. du Maine, who had fomented its discontent. M. le Duc, who had been admitted to our councils, and who was heart and soul against the bastards, proposed that at the Bed of Justice the education of the young King should be taken out of the control of M. du Maine and placed in his hands. He proposed also that the title of Prince of the Blood should be taken from him, with all the privileges it conferred, and that he should be reduced to the rank of a simple Duke and Peer, taking his place among the rest according to the date of his erection; thus, at a bound, going down to the bottom of the peerage!

Should these memoirs ever see the light, every one who reads them will be able to judge how such a proposition as this harmonised with my personal wishes. I had seen the bastards grow in rank and importance with an indignation and disgust I could scarcely contain. I had seen favour after favour heaped upon them by the late King, until he crowned all by elevating them to the rank of Princes of the Blood in defiance of all law, of all precedent, of all decency, if I must say the word. What I felt at this accumulation of honours I have more than once expressed; what I did to oppose such monstrous innovations has also been said. No man could be more against M. du Maine than I, and yet I opposed this proposition of M. le Duc because I thought one blow was enough at a time, and that it might be dangerous to attempt the two at once. M. du Maine had supporters, nay, he was at the head of a sort of party; strip

him of the important post he held, and what might not his rage, his disappointment, and his wounded ambition lead him to attempt? Civil war, perhaps, would be the result of his disgrace.

Again and again I urged these views, not only upon M. le Duc d'Orléans, but upon M. le Duc. Nay, with this latter I had two long stolen interviews in the Tuileries Gardens, where we spoke without constraint, and exhausted all our arguments. But M. le Duc was not to be shaken, and as I could do no more than I had done to move him, I was obliged at last to give in. It was resolved, however, that disgrace should fall upon M. du Maine alone; that his brother, the Comte de Toulouse, on account of the devotion to the State he had ever exhibited, and his excellent conduct since the death of the late King, should, when stripped of his title like the other, receive it back again the moment after, in acknowledgment of the services he had rendered to the Regent as Councillor of State, and as an expression of personal good feeling towards him, which his excellent qualities so justly merited.

I returned home from my last interview with M. le Duc, and went to mass at the Jacobins, to which I entered from my garden. It was not without a distracted mind. But I prayed to God sincerely and earnestly to guide my steps, so that I might labour for His glory and the good of the State without private ends. My prayer was heard, and in the sequel I had nothing to reproach myself with. I followed the straight road without turning to the right or to the left.

Fontanieu was waiting for me in my house as I returned home from mass, and I was obliged to listen

to his questions and to reply to them, as though I had nothing on my mind. I arranged my chamber like a Bed of Justice, I made him understand several things connected with the ceremonial that he had not understood before, and that it was essential he should in no way omit. Thus everything went on satisfactorily, and I began to count the hours, by day as well as by night, until the great day was to arrive on which the arrogant pride of the Parliament was to receive a check, and the false plumage which adorned the bastards was to be plucked from them.

In the midst of the sweet joy that I felt, no bitterness entered. I was satisfied with the part I had played in this affair, satisfied that I had acted sincerely, honestly, that I had not allowed my own private motives to sway me; that in the interests of the State, as opposed to my own interests, I had done all in my power to save the Duc du Maine. And yet I did not dare to give myself up to the rosy thoughts suggested by the great event, now so rapidly approaching. I toyed with them instead of allowing myself to embrace them. I shrunk from them as it were like a cold lover who fears the too ardent caresses of his mistress. I could not believe that the supreme happiness I had so long pined for was at last so near.* Might not M. le Duc d'Orléans falter at the last moment? Might not all our preparations, so carefully conducted, so cleverly planned, weigh upon his feebleness until they fell to the ground? It was not improbable. He was often firm in promises. How

* Is not this tone incredible but admirable? The patriotic Saint-Simon's highest aim in life was to reduce a king's bastard from a rank improperly bestowed upon him; and he confesses this with exquisite naïveté!

often was he firm in carrying them out? All these questions, all these restless doubts—natural as it appears to me under the circumstances—winged their way through my mind, and kept me excited and feverish as though life and death were hanging on one thread.

In the midst of my reflections, a messenger from M. le Duc d'Orléans, Millain by name, arrived at my house. It was on the afternoon of Thursday, the 25th of August, 1718. His message was simple. M. le Duc d'Orléans was in the same mood as ever, and I was to join him at the Palais Royal, according to previous agreement, at eight o'clock in the evening. The Bed of Justice was to be held on the morrow.

Never was kiss given to a beautiful mistress sweeter than that which I imprinted upon the fat old face of this charming messenger! * A close embrace, eagerly repeated, was my first reply, followed afterwards by an overflow of feeling for M. le Duc, and for Millain even, who had worthily served in this great undertaking.

The rest of the day I passed at home with the Abbé Dubois, Fagon, and the Duc de la Force, one after the other finishing up our work. We provided against everything. If the Parliament refused to come to the Tuileries, its interdiction was determined on: if any of the members attempted to leave Paris they were to be arrested; troops were to be assembled in order to carry out the Regent's orders; we left no accident without its remedy.

The Abbé Dubois arranged a little code of signals,

* Foolish, enthusiastic Saint-Simon, how unconsciously you give us a standard whereby to measure your intellect! This was written in 1718. How different from the tone of the earlier volumes!

such as crossing the legs, shaking a handkerchief, or other simple gestures, to be given the first thing in the morning to the officers of the body-guards chosen to be in attendance in the room where the Bed of Justice was to be held. They were to fix their eyes upon the Regent, and when he made any of the above signals, immediately to act upon it according to their written instructions. The Abbé Dubois also drew out a sort of programme for M. le Duc d'Orléans, of the different orders he was to give during the night, fixing the hour for each, so that they might not arrive a minute too soon or a minute too late, and secrecy thus be maintained to the very latest moment.

Towards eight o'clock in the evening I went to the Palais Royal. I was horror-struck to find M. le Duc d'Orléans in bed with fever, as he said; I felt his pulse. Fever, he had, sure enough; perhaps from excitement caused by the business in hand. I said to him it was only fatigue of body and mind, of which he would be quit in twenty-four hours; he, on his side, protested that whatever it might be, he would hold the Bed of Justice on the morrow. M. le Duc, who had just entered, was at his pillow; the chamber lighted by a single wax candle. We sat down, M. le Duc and I, and passed in review the orders given and to give, not without much apprehension on account of this fever, come so strangely out of season to the healthiest man in the world, and who had never had it before.

I exhorted the Regent to take as much repose as he could, so that he might be fully able to execute the great work of the morrow, the safety of the Regency itself being at stake. After this I felt his pulse again,

not without fear. I assured him, however, his illness would be nothing; without, it is true, being too sure of it myself. I took my leave about ten o'clock, and went out of the room with Millain. When I found myself alone with him in the cabinet, through which we passed, I embraced him with an extreme pleasure. We had entered by the backstairs; we descended by the same, so as not to be observed. It was dark, so that on both occasions we were obliged to grope our way. Upon arriving at the bottom I could not refrain from again embracing Millain, so great was my pleasure, and we separated each to his home.*

The arrangements respecting the troops and for summoning the Parliament, etc., were all carried out to the letter during the night and early morning. At the hours agreed upon M. le Duc d'Orléans gave the various orders. About four o'clock in the morning the Duc du Maine, as colonel-general of the Swiss guards, was aroused. He had not been in bed above an hour, having just returned from a fête given at the arsenal by Madame du Maine. He was doubtless much astonished, but contained himself, hid his fear, and sent at once to instruct his companies of Swiss guards of the orders they were to execute. I don't think he slept very well after this, uncertain as he must have been what was going to happen. But I never knew what he or Madame du Maine did after being thus rudely disturbed.

Towards five o'clock in the morning drums began to

* All this is exceedingly amusing and characteristic. Our respect for Saint-Simon as a politician diminishes every page; but our affection increases for the man. Behold him, in his great wig, showering embraces on his fat friend at every step!

be heard throughout the town, and soon soldiers were seen in movement. At six o'clock a message was sent to the Parliament requesting it to attend at the Tuileries. The reply was that the request should be obeyed. The members thereupon debated whether they should go to the Tuileries in coaches or on foot. The last mode was adopted as being the most ordinary, and in the hope of stirring the people and arriving at the Tuileries with a yelling crowd. What happened will be related in its place.

At the same time, horsemen went to all the Peers and officers of the Crown, and to all the chevaliers of the order, the governors and lieutenant-governors of the provinces (who were to accompany the King), informing them of the Bed of Justice. The Comte de Toulouse had been to supper at the house of M. de Nevers, near Saint-Denis, and did not return until late into the night. The French and Swiss guards were under arms in various quarters; the watch, the light horse, and the two companies of musketeers all ready in their barracks; the usual guard at the Tuileries.

If I had slept but little during the last eight days, I slept still less that night, so near to the most considerable events. I rose before six o'clock, and shortly after received my summons to the Bed of Justice, on the back of which was a note that I was not to be awakened, a piece of politeness due to the knowledge of the bearer, who was aware that this summons would teach me nothing I did not know. All the others had been awakened, surprised thereby to an extent that may be imagined.

Towards eight o'clock in the morning a messenger

from M. le Duc d'Orléans came to remind me of the Regency Council at eight o'clock, and to attend it in my mantle. I dressed myself in black, because I had only that suit with a mantle, and another, a magnificent one in cloth of gold, which I did not wish to wear lest it should cause the remark to be made, though much out of season, that I wished to insult the Parliament and M. du Maine. I took two gentlemen with me in my coach, and I went in order to witness all that was to take place. I was at the same time full of fear, hope, joy, reflection, and mistrust of M. le Duc d'Orléans' weakness, and all that might result from it. I was also firmly resolved to do my best, whatever might happen, but without appearing to know anything, and without eagerness, and I resolved to show presence of mind, attention, circumspection, modesty, and much moderation.

Upon leaving my house I went to Valincourt, who lived behind the hôtel of the Comte de Toulouse. He was a very honourable man, of much intellect, moving among the best company, secretary-general of the navy, devoted to the Comte de Toulouse ever since his early youth, and possessing all his confidence. I did not wish to leave the Comte de Toulouse in any personal fear, or expose him to be led away by his brother. I sent therefore for Valincourt, whom I knew intimately, to come and speak to me. He came half-dressed, terrified at the rumours flying over the town, and eagerly asked me what they all meant. I drew him close to me and said, "Listen attentively to me, and lose not a word. Go immediately to M. le Comte de Toulouse, tell him he may trust in my word, tell him to be dis-

creet, and that things are about to happen to others which may displease him, but that not a hair of his head shall be touched. I hope he will not have a moment's uneasiness. Go! and lose not an instant."

Valincourt held me in a tight embrace. "Ah, Monsieur," said he, "we foresaw that at last there would be a storm. It is well merited, but not by M. le Comte, who will be eternally obliged to you." And he went immediately with my message to the Comte de Toulouse, who never forgot that I saved him from the fall of his brother.

CHAPTER IV.

The Material Preparations for the Bed of Justice—Arrival of the Duc d'Orléans—The Council Chamber—Attitude of the Various Actors—The Duc du Maine—Various Movements—Arrival of the Duc de Toulouse—Anxiety of the Two Bastards—They Leave the Room—Subsequent Proceedings—Arrangement of the Council Chamber—Speech of the Regent — Countenances of the Members of Council — The Regent Explains the Object of the Bed of Justice—Speech of the Keeper of the Seals—Taking the Votes—Incidents that Followed—New Speech of the Duc d'Orléans—Against the Bastards—My Joy—I Express My Opinion Modestly—Exception in Favour of the Comte de Toulouse—New Proposal of M. le Duc—Its Effect—Threatened Disobedience of the Parliament—Proper Measures—The Parliament Sets Out.

I ARRIVED at the grand court of the Tuileries about eight o'clock without having remarked anything extraordinary on the way. The coaches of the Duc de Noailles, of Maréchal de Villars, of Maréchal d'Huxelles, and of some others were already there. I ascended without finding many people about, and directed the two doors of the Salle des Gardes, which were closed, to be opened. The Bed of Justice was prepared in the grand ante-chamber, where the King was accustomed to eat. I stopped a short time to see

if everything was in proper order, and felicitated Fontanieu in a low voice. He said to me in the same manner that he had arrived at the Tuileries with his workmen and materials at six o'clock in the morning; that everything was so well constructed and put up that the King had not heard a sound; that his chief *valet de chambre* having left the room for some commission about seven o'clock in the morning, had been much astonished upon seeing this apparatus; that the Maréchal de Villeroy had only heard of it through him, and that the seats had been erected with such little noise that nobody had heard anything. After having well examined everything with my eyes I advanced to the throne, then being finished; wishing to enter the second ante-chamber, some servants came to me, saying that I could not go in, all being locked up. I asked where I was to await the assembling of the Council, and was admitted to a room upstairs, where I found a good number of people already congregated.

After chatting some time with the Keeper of the Seals, the arrival of M. le Duc d'Orléans was announced. We finished what we had to say, and went downstairs separately, not wishing to be seen together.

The Council was held in a room which ever since the very hot weather the King had slept in. The hangings of his bed, and of the Maréchal de Villeroy's were drawn back. The Council table was placed at the foot of one of the beds. Upon entering the adjoining chamber I found many people whom the first rumours of

such an unexpected occurrence had no doubt led there, and among the rest some of the Council. M. le Duc d'Orléans was in the midst of a crowd at the end of the room, and, as I afterwards learned, had just seen the Duc du Maine without speaking to him, or being spoken to.

After a passing glance upon this crowd I entered the Council chamber. I found scattered there the majority of those who composed the Council with serious and troubled looks, which increased my seriousness. Scarcely anybody spoke; and each, standing or seated here and there, kept himself in his place. The better to examine all, I joined nobody. A moment after M. le Duc d'Orléans entered with a gay, easy, untroubled air, and looked smilingly upon the company. I considered this of good augury. Immediately afterwards I asked him his news. He replied aloud that he was tolerably well; then approaching my ear, added that, except when aroused to give his orders, he had slept very well, and that he was determined to hold firm. This infinitely pleased me, for it seemed to me by his manner that he was in earnest, and I briefly exhorted him to remain so.

Came, afterwards, M. le Duc, who pretty soon approached me, and asked if I augured well from the Regent, and if he would remain firm. M. le Duc had an air of exceeding gaiety, which was perceptible to those behind the scenes. The Duc de Noailles devoured everything with his eyes, which sparkled with anger because he had not been initiated into the secret of this great day.

In due time M. du Maine appeared in his mantle, entering by the King's little door. Never before had he made so many or such profound reverences as he did now—though he was not usually very stingy of them —then standing alone, resting upon his stick near the Council table, he looked around at everybody. Then and there, being in front of him, with the table between us, I made him the most smiling bow I had ever given him, and did it with extreme volupty. He repaid me in the same coin, and continued to fix his eyes upon everybody in turn, his face agitated, and nearly always speaking to himself.

A few minutes after M. le Duc came to me, begging me to exhort M. le Duc d'Orléans to firmness: then the Keeper of the Seals came forth for the same purpose. M. le Duc d'Orléans himself approached me to say something a moment afterwards, and he had no sooner quitted my side than M. le Duc, impatient and troubled, came to know in what frame of mind was the Regent. I told him good in a monosyllable, and sent him away.

I know not if these movements, upon which all eyes were fixed, began to frighten the Duc du Maine, but no sooner had M. le Duc joined the Regent, after quitting me, than the Duc du Maine went to speak to the Maréchal de Villeroy and to D'Effiat, both seated at the end of the room towards the King's little door, their backs to the wall. They did not rise for the Duc du Maine, who remained standing opposite, and quite near them, all three holding long discourses, like people who deliberate with embarrassment and surprise, as it ap-

peared to me by the faces of the two I saw, and which I tried not to lose sight of.

During this time M. le Duc d'Orléans and M. le Duc spoke to each other near the window and the ordinary entrance door; the Keeper of the Seals, who was near, joined them. At this moment M. le Duc turned round a little, which gave me the opportunity to make signs to him of the other conference, which he immediately saw. I was alone, near the Council table, very attentive to everything, and the others scattered about began to become more so. A little while after the Duc du Maine placed himself where he had been previously: the two he quitted remained as before. M. du Maine was thus again in front of me, the table between us. I observed that he had a bewildered look, and that he spoke to himself more than ever.

The Comte de Toulouse arrived as the Regent had just quitted the two persons with whom he had been talking. The Comte de Toulouse was in his mantle, and saluted the company with a grave and meditative manner, neither accosting nor accosted. M. le Duc d'Orléans found himself in front of him and turned towards me, although at some distance, as though to testify his trouble. I bent my head a little while looking fixedly at him, as though to say, "Well, what then?"

A short time afterwards the Comte de Toulouse had a conversation with his brother, both speaking with agitation and without appearing to agree very well. Then the Count approached M. le Duc d'Orléans, who was talking again to M. le Duc, and they spoke at some

length to each other. As their faces were towards the wall, nothing but their backs could be seen, no emotion and scarcely a gesture was visible.

The Duc du Maine had remained where he had spoken to his brother. He seemed half dead, looked askance upon the company with wandering eyes, and the troubled agitated manner of a criminal, or a man condemned to death. Shortly afterwards he became pale as a corpse, and appeared to me to have been taken ill. He crawled to the end of the table, during which the Comte de Toulouse came and said a word to the Regent, and began to walk out of the room.

All these movements took place in a trice. The Regent, who was near the King's arm-chair, said aloud, "Now, gentlemen, let us take our places." Each approached to do so, and as I looked behind mine I saw the two brothers at the door as though about to leave the room. I leaped, so to speak, between the King's arm-chair and M. le Duc d'Orléans, and whispered in the Regent's ear so as not to be heard by the Prince de Conti:

"Monsieur, look at them. They are going."

"I know it," he replied tranquilly.

"Yes," I exclaimed with animation, "but do you know what they will do when they are outside?"

"Nothing at all," said he: "the Comte de Toulouse has asked me for permission to go out with his brother; he has assured me that they will be discreet."

"And if they are not?" I asked.

"They will be. But if they are not, they will be well looked after."

"But if they commit some absurdity, or leave Paris?"

"They will be arrested. Orders have been given, and I will answer for their execution."

Therefore, more tranquil, I sat down in my place. Scarcely had I got there than the Regent called me back, and said that since they had left the room, he should like to tell the Council what was going to be done with respect to them. I replied that the only objection to this, their presence, being now removed—I thought it would be wrong not to do so. He asked M. le Duc in a whisper, across the table,—afterwards called to the Keeper of the Seals; both agreed, and then we really seated ourselves.

These movements had augmented the trouble and curiosity of every one. The eyes of all, occupied with the Regent, had been removed from the door, so that the absence of the bastards was by no means generally remarked. As soon as it was perceived, everybody looked inquiringly around, and remained standing in expectation. I sat down in the seat of the Comte de Toulouse. The Duc de Guiche, who sat on the other side of me, left a seat between us, and still waited for the bastards. He told me to approach nearer to him, saying I had mistaken my place. I replied not a word, looking on at the company, which was a sight to see. At the second or third summons, I replied that he, on the contrary, must approach me.

"And M. le Comte de Toulouse?" replied he.

"Approach," said I, and seeing him motionless with astonishment, looking towards the Duc du Maine's

seat, which had been taken by the Keeper of the Seals, I pulled him by his coat (I was seated), saying to him, "Come here and sit down."

I pulled him so hard that he seated himself near me without understanding aught.

"But what is the meaning of all this?" he demanded; "where are these gentlemen?"

"I don't know," replied I, impatiently; "but they are not here."

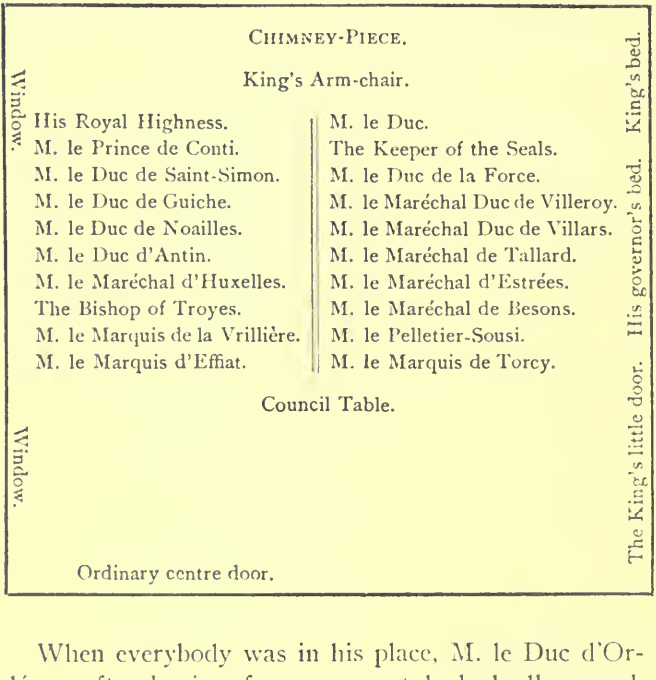
At the same time, the Duc de Noailles, who sat next to the Duc de Guiche, and who, enraged at counting for nothing in preparations for such a great day, had apparently divined that I was in the plot, vanquished by his curiosity, stretched over the table in front of the Duc de Guiche, and said to me:

"In the name of Heaven, M. le Duc, do me the favour to say what all this means?"

I was at daggers-drawn with him, as I have explained, and had no mercy for him. I turned, therefore, towards him with a cold and disdainful air, and, after having heard him out, and looked at him, I turned away again. That was all my reply. The Duc de Guiche pressed me to say something, even if it was only that I knew all. I denied it, and yet each seated himself slowly, because intent only upon looking around, and divining what all this could mean, and because it was a long time before any one could comprehend that we must proceed to business without the bastards, although nobody opened his mouth.

Before relating what took place at this Council, I will explain the arrangement of the chamber in which

it was held, so that what has just been explained, and what is going to be, may appear clearer.



When everybody was in his place, M. le Duc d'Orléans after having for a moment looked all around, every eye fixed upon him, said that he had assembled this Regency Council to hear read the resolutions adopted at the last; that he had come to the conclusion that there was no other means of obtaining the registration of the finance edict recently passed than that of holding a Bed of Justice; that the heat rendering it unadvisable to jeopardise the King's health in the midst of the crowd

of the Palais de Justice, he had thought it best to follow the example of the late King, who had sometimes sent for the Parliament to the Tuileries; that, as it had become necessary to hold this Bed of Justice, he had thought it right to profit by the occasion, and register the *lettres de provision* of the Keeper of the Seals at the commencement of the sitting; and he ordered the Keeper of the Seals to read them.

During this reading, which had no other importance than to seize an occasion of forcing the Parliament to recognize the Keeper of the Seals, whose person and whose commission they hated, I occupied myself in examining the faces.

I saw M. le Duc d'Orléans with an air of authority and of attention, so new that I was struck with it. M. le Duc, gay and brilliant, appeared quite at his ease, and confident. The Prince de Conti, astonished, absent, meditative, seemed to see nothing and to take part in nothing. The Keeper of the Seals, grave and pensive, appeared to have too many things in his head; nevertheless, with bag, wax, and seals near him, he looked very decided and very firm. The Duc de la Force hung his head, but examined on the sly the faces of us all. Maréchal Villeroy and Maréchal de Villars spoke to each other now and then; both had irritated eyes and long faces. Nobody was more composed than the Maréchal de Tallard; but he could not hide an internal agitation which often peeped out. The Maréchal d'Estrées had a stupefied air, as though he saw nothing but a mist before him. The Maréchal de Besons, enveloped more than ordinarily in his big wig, appeared deeply meditative, his look cast down and

angry. Pelletier, very buoyant, simple, curious, looking at everything. Torcy, three times more starched than usual, seemed to look at everything by stealth. Effiat, meddlesome, piqued, outraged, ready to boil over, fuming at everybody, his look haggard, as it passed precipitously, and by fits and starts, from side to side. Those on my side I could not well examine; I saw them only by moments as they changed their postures or I mine; and then not well or for long. I have already spoken of the astonishment of the Duc de Guiche, and of the vexation and curiosity of the Duc de Noailles. D'Antin, usually of such easy carriage, appeared to me as though in fetters, and quite scared. The Maréchal d'Huxelles tried to put a good face on the matter, but could not hide the despair which pierced him. Old Troyes, all abroad, showed nothing but surprise and embarrassment, and did not appear to know where he was.

From the first moment of this reading and the departure of the bastards, everybody saw that something was in preparation against them. What that something was to be, kept every mind in suspense. A Bed of Justice, too, prepared in secret, ready as soon as announced, indicated a strong resolution taken against the Parliament, and indicated also so much firmness and measure in a Prince, usually supposed to be entirely incapable of any, that every one was at sea. All, according as they were allied to the Parliament or to the bastards, seemed to wait in fear what was to be proposed. Many others appeared deeply wounded because the Regent had not admitted them behind the scenes, and because they were compelled to share the

common surprise. Never were faces so universally elongated; never was embarrassment more general or more marked. In these first moments of trouble I fancy few people lent an ear to the letters the Keeper of the Seals was reading. When they were finished, M. le Duc d'Orléans said he did not think it was worth while to take the votes one by one, either upon the contents of these letters or their registration; but that all would be in favour of commencing the Bed of Justice at once.

After a short but marked pause, the Regent developed, in few words, the reasons which had induced the Council at its last sitting, to abrogate the decree of the Parliament. He added, that judging by the conduct of that assembly, it would have been to jeopardise anew the King's authority, to send for registration this act of abrogation to the Parliament, which would assuredly have given in public a proof of formal disobedience, in refusing to register; that there being no other remedy than a Bed of Justice, he had thought it best to assemble one, but in secret, so as not to give time or opportunity to the ill-disposed to prepare for disobedience; that he believed, with the Keeper of the Seals, the frequency and the manner of the parliamentary remonstrances were such that the Parliament must be made to keep within the limits of its duty, which, long since, it seemed to have lost sight of; that the Keeper of the Seals would now read to the Council the act of abrogation, and the rules that were to be observed in future. Then, looking at the Keeper of the Seals, "Monsieur," said he, "you will explain this better than I. Have the goodness to do so before reading the decree."

The Keeper of the Seals then spoke, and paraphrased what his Royal Highness had said more briefly; he explained in what manner the Parliament had the right to remonstrate, showed the distinction between its power and that of the Crown; the incompetence of the tribunals in all matters of state and finance; and the necessity of repressing the remonstrances of Parliament by passing a code (that was the term used), which was to serve as their inviolable guide. All this explained without lengthiness, with grace and clearness, he began to read the decree, as it has since been printed and circulated everywhere, some trifling alteration excepted.

The reading finished, the Regent, contrary to his custom, showed his opinion by the praises he gave to this document: and then, assuming the Regent's tone and air he had never before put on, and which completed the astonishment of the company, he added, "Today, gentlemen, I shall deviate from the usual rule in taking your votes, and I think it will be well to do so during all this Council."

Then after a slight glance upon both sides of the table, during which you might have heard a worm crawl, he turned towards M. le Duc and asked him his opinion. M. le Duc declared for the decree, alleging several short but strong reasons. The Prince de Conti spoke in the same sense. I spoke after, for the Keeper of the Seals had done so directly his reading was finished. My opinion was given in more general terms so as not to fall too heavily upon the Parliament, or to show that I arrogated to myself the right to support his Royal Highness in the same manner as a prince of

the blood. The Duc de la Force was longer. All spoke, but the majority said but little, and some allowed their vexation to be seen, but did not dare to oppose, feeling that it would be of no use. Dejection was painted upon their faces; it was evident this affair of the Parliament was not what they expected or wished. Tallard was the only one whose face did not betray him; but the suffocated monosyllable of the Maréchal d'Huxelles tore off the rest of the mask. The Duc de Noailles could scarcely contain himself, and spoke more than he wished, with anguish worthy of Fresnes. M. le Duc d'Orléans spoke last, and with unusual force; then made a pause, piercing all the company with his eyes.

At this moment the Maréchal de Villeroy, full of his own thoughts, muttered between his teeth, "But will the Parliament come?" This was gently taken up. M. le Duc d'Orléans replied that he did not doubt it; and immediately afterwards, that it would be as well to know when they set out. The Keeper of the Seals said he should be informed. M. le Duc de Orléans replied that the door-keepers must be told. Thereupon up jumps M. de Troyes.

I was seized with such a sudden fear lest he should go and chatter at the door with some one, that I jumped up also, and got the start of him. As I returned, D'Antin, who had turned round to lay wait for me, begged me for mercy's sake to tell him what all this meant. I sped on saying that I knew nothing. "Tell that to others! Ho, ho!" replied he. When he had resumed his seat, M. le Duc d'Orléans said something, I don't know what, M. de Troyes still

standing, I also. In passing La Vrillière, I asked him to go to the door every time anything was wanted, for fear of the babbling of M. de Troyes; adding, that distant as I was from the door, going there looked too peculiar. La Vrillière did as I begged him all the rest of the sitting.

As I was returning to my place, D'Antin, still in ambush, begged me in the name of heaven, his hands joined, to tell him something. I kept firm, however, saying, "You will see." The Duc de Guiche pressed me as resolutely, even saying, it was evident I was in the plot. I remained deaf.

These little movements over, M. le Duc d'Orléans, rising a little in his seat, said to the company, in a tone more firm, and more like that of a master than before, that there was another matter now to attend too, much more important than the one just heard. This prelude increased the general astonishment, and rendered everybody motionless. After a moment of silence the Regent said, that the peers had had for some time good grounds of complaint against certain persons, who by unaccustomed favour, had been allowed to assume rank and dignity to which their birth did not entitle them; that it was time this irregularity should be stopped short, and that with this view, an instrument had been drawn up, which the Keeper of the Seals would read to them.

A profound silence followed this discourse, so unexpected, and which began to explain the absence of the bastards. Upon many visages a sombre hue was painted. As for me I had enough to do to compose my own visage, upon which all eyes successively

passed; I had put upon it an extra coat of gravity and of modesty; I steered my eyes with care, and only looked horizontally at most, not an inch higher. As soon as the Regent opened his mouth on this business, M. le Duc cast upon me a triumphant look which almost routed my seriousness, and which warned me to increase it, and no longer expose myself to meet his glance. Contained in this manner, attentive in devouring the aspect of all, alive to everything and to myself, motionless, glued to my chair, all my body fixed, penetrated with the most acute and most sensible pleasure that joy could impart, with the most charming anxiety, with an enjoyment, so perseveringly and so immoderately hoped for, I sweated with agony at the captivity of my transport, and this agony was of a voluptuousness such as I had never felt before,—such as I have never felt since. How inferior are the pleasures of the senses to those of the mind!—and how true it is that the balance-weight of misfortunes, is the good fortune that finishes them!

A moment after the Regent had ceased speaking, he told the Keeper of the Seals to read the declaration. During the reading, which was more than music to my ears, my attention was again fixed on the company. I saw by the alteration of the faces what an immense effect this document, which embodied the resolutions I have already explained, produced upon some of our friends. The whole of the reading was listened to with the utmost attention, and the utmost emotion.

When it was finished, M. le Duc d'Orléans said he was very sorry for this necessity, but that justice must be done to the peers as well as to the princes of the

blood: then turning to the Keeper of the Seals asked him for his opinion.

This latter spake briefly and well; but was like a dog running over hot ashes. He declared for the Declaration. His Royal Highness then called upon M. le Duc for his opinion. It was short, but nervous, and polite to the peers. M. le Prince de Conti the same. Then the Regent asked me my opinion. I made, contrary to my custom, a profound inclination, but without rising, and said, that having the honour to find myself the eldest of the peers of the Council, I offered to his Royal Highness my very humble thanks and those of all the peers of France, for the justice so ardently desired,—and touching so closely our dignity and our persons,—that he had resolved to render us; that I begged him to be persuaded of our gratitude, and to count upon our utmost attachment to his person for an act of equity so longed for, and so complete; that in this sincere expression of our sentiments consisted all our opinion, because, being pleaders, we could not be judges also. I terminated these few words with a profound inclination, without rising, imitated by the Duc de la Force at the same moment; all the rest of the Council briefly gave their opinions, approving what the majority of them evidently did not approve at all.

I had tried to modulate my voice, so that it should be just heard and no more, preferring to be indistinct rather than speak too loudly; and confined all my person to express as much as possible, gravity, modesty, and simple gratitude. M. le Duc maliciously made signs to me in smiling, that I had spoken well. But I

kept my seriousness, and turned round to examine all the rest.

It would be impossible to describe the aspect of the company. Nothing was seen but people, oppressed with surprise that overwhelmed them, meditative, agitated, some irritated, some but ill at ease, like La Force and Guiche, who freely admitted so to me.

The opinions taken almost as soon as demanded, M. le Duc d'Orléans said, " Gentlemen, it is finished, then: justice is done, and the rights of Messieurs the Peers are in safety. I have now an act of grace to propose to you, and I do so with all the more confidence, because I have taken care to consult the parties interested, who support me; and because, I have drawn up the document in a manner to wound no one. What I am going to explain to you, regards the Comte de Toulouse alone.

" Nobody is ignorant how he has disapproved all that has been done in favour of him and his brother, and that he has sustained it since the regency only out of respect for the wishes of the late King. Everybody knows also his virtue, his merit, his application, his probity, his disinterestedness. Nevertheless, I could not avoid including him in the declaration you have just heard. Justice furnishes no exception in his favour, and the rights of the Peers must be assured. Now that they are no longer attacked, I have thought fitly to render to merit what from equity I have taken from birth; and to make an exception of M. le Comte de Toulouse, which (while confirming the rule), will leave him in full possession of all the honours he enjoys to the exclusion of every other. Those honours

are not to pass to his children, should he marry and have any, or their restitution be considered as a precedent to be made use of at any future time.

"I have the pleasure to announce that the Princes of the Blood consent to this, and that such of the Peers to whom I have been able to explain myself, share my sentiments. I doubt not that the esteem he has acquired here will render this proposition agreeable to you." And then turning to the Keeper of the Seals, "Monsieur, will you read the declaration?"

It was read at once.

I had, during the discourse of his Royal Highness, thrown all my attention into an examination of the impression it made upon the assembly. The astonishment it caused was general; it was such, that to judge of those addressed, it seemed that they understood nothing; and they did not recover themselves during all the reading. I inwardly rejoiced at success so pleasingly demonstrated and did not receive too well the Duc de Guiche, who testified to me his disapprobation. Villeroy confounded, Villars raging, Effiat rolling his eyes, Estrées beside himself with surprise, were the most marked. Tallard, with his head stretched forward, sucked in, so to speak, all the Regent's words as they were proffered, and those of the Declaration, as the Keeper of the Seals read them. Noailles, inwardly distracted, could not hide his distraction; Huxelles, entirely occupied in smoothing himself, forgot to frown. I divided my attention between the declaration and these persons.

The document read, M. le Duc d'Orléans praised it in two words, and called upon the Keeper of the Seals

to give his opinion. He did so briefly, in favour of the Comte de Toulouse. M. le Duc the same; M. le Prince de Conti the same. After him, I testified to his Royal Highness my joy at seeing him conciliate the justice and the safety of the peers with the unheard-of favour he had just rendered to the virtue of M. le Comte de Toulouse, who merited it by his moderation, his truthfulness, his attachment to the State; thus the more he had recognised the injustice of his elevation to the rank to which he was raised, the more he had rendered himself worthy of it, and the more it was advantageous to the peers to yield to merit, (when this exception was confined solely to his person, with formal and legal precautions, so abundantly supplied by the Declaration) and voluntarily contribute thus to an elevation without example, (so much the more flattering because its only foundation was virtue), so as to incite that virtue more and more to the service and utility of the state; that I declared therefore with joy for the Declaration, and did not fear to add the very humble thanks of the peers, since I had the honour to be the oldest present.

As I closed my mouth I cast my eyes in front of some, and plainly saw that my applause did not please, and, perhaps, my thanks still less. The others gave their opinion with heavy heart, as it were, to so terrible a blow, some few muttered I know not what between their teeth, but the thunderbolt upon the Duc du Maine's cabal was more and more felt, and as reflection succeeded to the first feeling of surprise, so a bitter and sharp grief manifested itself upon their faces in so marked a manner, that it was easy to see it had become high time to strike.

All opinions having been expressed, M. le Duc cast a brilliant leer at me, and prepared to speak; but the Keeper of the Seals, who, from his side of the table, did not see this movement, wishing also to say something, M. le Duc d'Orléans intimated to him that M. le Duc had the start of him. Raising himself majestically from his seat, the Regent then said: "Gentlemen, M. le Duc has a proposition to make to you. I have found it just and reasonable; I doubt not, you will find it so too." Then turning towards M. le Duc, he added, "Monsieur, will you explain it?"

The movement these few words made among the company is inexpressible. 'Twas as though I saw before me people deprived of all power, and surprised by a new assembly rising up from the midst of them in an asylum they had breathlessly reached.

"Monsieur," said M. le Duc, addressing himself to the Regent, as usual; "since you have rendered justice to the Dukes, I think I am justified in asking for it myself. The deceased King gave the education of his Majesty to M. le Duc du Maine. I was a minor then, and according to the idea of the deceased King, M. du Maine was prince of the blood, capable of succeeding to the crown. Now I am of age, and not only M. du Maine is no longer prince of the blood, but he is reduced to the rank of his peerage. M. le Maréchal de Villeroy is now his senior, and precedes him everywhere; M. le Maréchal can therefore no longer remain governor of the King, under the superintendence of M. du Maine. I ask you, then, for M. du Maine's post, that I think my age, my rank, my attachment to the King and the State, qualify me for. I hope," he added,

turning towards his left, "that I shall profit by the lessons of M. le Maréchal de Villeroy, acquit myself of my duties with distinction, and merit his friendship."

At this discourse the Maréchal de Villeroy almost slipped off his chair. As soon, at least, as he heard the words, "Superintendence of the King's education," he rested his forehead upon his stick, and remained several moments in that posture. He appeared even to understand nothing of the rest of the speech. Villars and D'Effiat bent their backs like people who had received the last blow. I could see nobody on my own side except the Duc de Guiche, who approved through all his prodigious astonishment. Estrées became master of himself the first, shook himself, brightened up, and looked at the company like a man who returns from the other world.

As soon as M. le Duc had finished, M. le Duc d'Orléans reviewed all the company with his eyes, and then said, that the request of M. le Duc was just; that he did not think it could be refused; that M. le Maréchal de Villeroy could not be allowed to remain under a person whom he preceded in rank; that the superintendence of the King's education could not be more worthily filled than by M. le Duc; and that he was persuaded all would be of one voice in this matter. Immediately afterwards, he asked M. le Prince de Conti to give his opinion, who did so in two words; then he asked the Keeper of the Seals, whose reply was equally brief; then he asked me.

I simply said, looking at M. le Duc, that I was for the change with all my heart. The rest, M. de la Force excepted (who said a single word), voted with-

out speaking, simply bowing; the Marshals and D'Effiat scarcely moved their eyes, and those of Villars glistened with fury.

The opinions taken, the Regent turning towards M. le Duc, said, "Monsieur, I think you would like to read what you intend to say to the King at the Bed of Justice."

Therefore M. le Duc read it as it has been printed. Some moments of sad and profound silence succeeded this reading, during which the Maréchal de Villeroy, pale and agitated, muttered to himself. At last, like a man who has made up his mind, he turned with bended head, expiring eyes, and feeble voice, towards the Regent, and said, "I will simply say these two words; here are all the dispositions of the late king overturned, I cannot see it without grief. M. du Maine is very unfortunate."

"Monsieur," replied the Regent, in a loud and animated tone, "M. du Maine is my brother-in-law, but I prefer an open enemy to a hidden one."

At this great declaration several lowered their heads. The Maréchal de Villeroy nearly swooned; sighs began to make themselves heard near me, as though by stealth; everybody felt by this that the scabbard was thrown away.

The Keeper of the Seals, to make a diversion, proposed to read the speech he had prepared to serve as preface to the decree to be read at the Bed of Justice, abrogating the Parliament decrees; as he was finishing it, some one entered to say he was asked for at the door.

He went out, returning immediately afterwards, not

to his place, but to M. le Duc d'Orléans, whom he took into a window, meditative silence reigning around. The Regent having returned back to his place, said to the company, he had received information that the Chief-President of the Parliament, notwithstanding the reply previously made, had proposed that the Parliament should not go to the Tuileries, asking, "What it was to do in a place where it would not be free?" that he had proposed to send a message to the King, stating that "his Parliament would hear his wishes in their ordinary place of meeting, whenever it should please him to come or to send." The Regent added that these propositions had made considerable sensation, and that the Parliament were at that moment debating upon them. The Council appeared much astounded at this news, but M. le Duc d'Orléans said, in a very composed manner, that he did not expect a refusal; he ordered the Keeper of the Seals, nevertheless, to propose such measures as it would be best to take, supposing the motion of the Chief-President should be carried.

The Keeper of the Seals declared that he could not believe the Parliament would be guilty of this disobedience, contrary to all law and usage. He showed at some length that nothing was so pernicious as to expose the King's authority to a formal opposition, and decided in favour of the immediate interdiction of the Parliament if it fell into this fault. M. le Duc d'Orléans added that there was no other course open, and took the opinion of M. le Duc, which was strongly in his favour. M. le Prince de Conti the same, mine also, that of M. de la Force and of M. de Guiche still more

so. The Maréchal de Villeroy, in a broken voice, seeking big words, which would not come in time to him, deplored this extremity, and did all he could to avoid giving a precise opinion. Forced at last by the Regent to explain himself, he did not dare to oppose, but added that he assented with regret, and wished to explain the grievous results of the proposed measure. But the Regent, interrupting him, said he need not take the trouble: everything had been foreseen; that it would be much more grievous to be disobeyed by the Parliament than to force it into obedience; and immediately after asked the Duc de Noailles his opinion, who replied that it would be very sad to act thus, but that he was for it. Villars wished to paraphrase, but contained himself, and said he hoped the Parliament would obey. Pressed by the Regent, he proposed to wait for fresh news before deciding; but, pressed more closely, he declared for the interdiction, with an air of warmth and vexation, extremely marked. Nobody after this dared to hesitate, and the majority voted by an inclination of the head.

A short time afterwards it was announced to M. le Duc d'Orléans that the Parliament had set out on foot, and had begun to defile through the palace. This news much cooled the blood of the company, M. le Duc d'Orléans more than that of any one else.

After this the Regent, in a cheerful manner, called upon the Presidents of the Councils to bring forward any business they might have on hand, but not one had any. The Maréchal de Villars said, however, that he had a matter to produce, and he produced it accordingly, but with a clearness which, under the circum-

stances, was extraordinary. I fancy, however, that very few knew what he was talking about. We were all too much occupied with more interesting matters, and each voted without speaking. Bad luck to those who had had business to bring forward this day; they who conducted it would have known but little what they said: they who listened, still less.

The Council finished thus, from lack of matter, and a movement was made to adjourn it as usual. I stepped in front of M. le Prince de Conti to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who understood me, and who begged the company to keep their seats. La Vrillière went out by order for news, but there was nothing fresh.

CHAPTER V.

Continuation of the Scene in the Council Chamber—Slowness of the Parliament—They Arrive at Last—The King Fetched—Commencement of the Bed of Justice—My Arrival—Its Effect—What I Observed—Absence of the Bastards Noticed—Appearance of the King—The Keeper of the Seals—The Proceedings Opened — Humiliation of the Parliament — Speech of the Chief-President—New Announcement—Fall of the Duc du Maine Announced—Rage of the Chief-President—My Extreme Joy—M. le Duc Substituted for M. du Maine — Indifference of the King — Registration of the Decrees.

IT was now a little after ten. We remained a good half-hour in our places, talking a little with each other, but on the whole rather silent. At the end some grew fidgety and anxious, rose and went to the windows. M. le Duc d'Orléans restrained them as well as he could; but at length Desgranges entered to say that the Chief-President had already arrived, in his coach, and that the Parliament was near. So soon as he had retired, the Council rose by groups, and could no longer be kept seated. M. le Duc d'Orléans himself at last rose, and all he could do was to prohibit everybody from leaving the room under any pretext, and this prohibition he repeated two or three times.

Scarcely had we risen when M. le Duc came to me,

rejoiced at the success that had hitherto been had, and much relieved by the absence of the bastards. Soon after I quitted him the Duc d'Orléans came to me, overpowered with the same sentiments. I said what I thought of the consternation of every one; and painted the expression of M. d'Effiat, at which he was not surprised. He was more so about Besons. I asked if he was not afraid the bastards would come to the Bed of Justice; but he was certain they would not. I was resolved, however, to prepare his mind against that contingency.

I walked about, slowly and incessantly without fixing myself on any one, in order that nothing should escape me, principally attending to the doors. I took advantage of the opportunity to say a word here and a word there, to pass continually near those who were suspected, to skim and interrupt all conversations. D'Antin was often joined by the Duc de Noailles, who had resumed his habit of the morning, and continually followed me with his eyes. He had an air of consternation, was agitated and embarrassed in countenance—he commonly so free and easy! D'Antin took me aside to see whether he could not, considering his position, be excused from attending the Bed of Justice. He received permission from the Regent on certain conditions.

I went then to break in upon the colloquy of D'Effiat and his friends, and taking them by surprise, caused D'Effiat to say that he had just heard strange resolutions, that he did not know who had advised them, that he prayed that M. d'Orléans would find them advantageous. I replied, agreeing with him. The Maréchal

de Villeroy sighed, muttered, and shook his wig, Villars spoke more at length, and blamed sharply what had been done. I assented to everything, being there not to persuade but to watch.

Nevertheless we grew weary of the slowness of the Parliament, and often sent out for news. Several of the Council tried to leave the room, perhaps to blab, but the Regent would allow no one but La Vrillière to go out, and seeing that the desire to leave increased, stood at the door himself. I suggested to him that Madame d'Orléans would be in a great state of uneasiness, and suggested that he should write to her; but he could not be persuaded to do it, though he promised.

At last the Parliament arrived, and behold us! like children, all at the windows. The members came in red robes, two by two, by the grand door of the court, which they passed in order to reach the Hall of the Ambassadors, where the Chief-President, who had come in his carriage with the president Haligre, awaited them.

The Parliament being in its place, the peers having arrived, and the presidents having put on their furs behind the screens arranged for that purpose in an adjoining room, a messenger came to inform us that all was ready. The question had been agitated, whether the King should dine meanwhile, and I had it carried in the negative, fearing lest coming immediately after to the Bed of Justice, and having eaten before his usual hour, he might be ill, which would have been a grievous inconvenience. As soon as it was announced to the Regent that we could set out, his Royal Highness sent word to the Parliament, to prepare the deputation to

receive the King; and then said aloud to the company, that it was time to go in search of his Majesty.

At these words I felt a storm of joy sweep over me, at the thought of the grand spectacle that was going to pass in my presence, which warned me to be doubly on my guard. I tried to furnish myself with the strongest dose of seriousness, gravity, and modesty. I followed M. le Duc d'Orléans, who entered the King's room by the little door, and who found the King in his cabinet. On the way the Duc d'Albret made me some very marked compliments, with evident desire to discover something. I put him off with politeness, complaints of the crowd, of the annoyance of my dress, and gained thus the King's cabinet.

The King was dressed as usual. When the Duc d'Orléans had been a few moments with him, he asked him if he would be pleased to go: and the way was instantly cleared, a procession formed, and the King moved towards the Hall of the Swiss Guard.

I now hastened to the chamber, where the Bed of Justice was to be held. The passage to it was tolerably free. The officers of the body-guard made place for me and for the Duc de la Force, and Maréchal de Villars, who followed me, one by one. I stopped a moment in the passage at the entrance to the room, seized with joy upon seeing this grand spectacle, and at the thought of the grand movement that was drawing nigh, I needed a pause in order to recover myself sufficiently to see distinctly what I looked at, and to put on a new coat of seriousness and of modesty. I fully expected I should be well examined by a company which had been carefully taught not to like me, and by the curious specta-

tors waiting to see what was to be hatched out of so profound a secret, in such an important assembly, summoned so hastily. Moreover, nobody was ignorant that I knew all, at least from the Council of the Regency I had just left.

I did not deceive myself. As soon as I appeared, all eyes were fixed upon me. I slowly advanced towards the chief *greffier*, and introducing myself between the two seats, I traversed the length of the room, in front of the King's people, who saluted me with a smiling air, and I ascended over three rows of high seats, where all the peers were in their places, and who rose as I approached the steps. I respectfully saluted them from the third row.

Seated in my elevated place, and with nothing before me, I was able to glance over the whole assembly. I did so at once, piercing everybody with my eyes. One thing alone restrained me; it was that I did not dare to fix my eyes upon certain objects. I feared the fire and brilliant significance of my looks at that moment so appreciated by everybody: and the more I saw I attracted attention, the more anxious was I to wean curiosity by my discreetness. I cast, nevertheless, a glittering glance upon the Chief-President and his friends, for the examination of whom I was admirably placed. I carried my looks over all the Parliament, and saw there an astonishment, a silence, a consternation, such as I had not expected, and which was of good augury to me. The Chief-President, insolently crestfallen, the other presidents disconcerted, and attentive to all, furnished me the most agreeable spectacle. The simply curious (among which I rank those who had no

vote) appeared to me not less surprised (but without the bewilderment of the others), calmly surprised; in a word, everybody showed much expectation and desire to divine what had passed at the Council.

I had but little leisure for this examination, for the King immediately arrived. The hubbub which followed his entrance, and which lasted until his Majesty and all who accompanied him were in their places, was another singularity. Everybody sought to penetrate the Regent, the Keeper of the Seals, and the principal personages. The departure of the bastards from the cabinet of the Council had redoubled attention, but everybody did not know of that departure; now everybody perceived their absence. The consternation of the Maréchals—of their senior—(the governor of the King) was evident. It augmented the dejection of the Chief-President, who not seeing his master the Duc du Maine, cast a terrible glance upon M. de Sully and me, who exactly occupied the places of the two brothers. In an instant all the eyes of the assembly were cast, at the same time, upon us; and I remarked that the meditativeness and expectation increased in every face. That of the Regent had an air of gentle but resolute majesty completely new to it, his eyes attentive, his deportment grave, but easy. M. le Duc, sage, measured, but encircled by I know not what brilliancy, which adorned all his person and which was evidently kept down. M. le Prince de Conti appeared dull, pensive, his mind far away perhaps. I was not able during the sitting to see them except now and then, and under pretext of looking at the King, who was serious, majestic, and at the same time as pretty as can be imagined;

grave, with grace in all his bearing, his air attentive, and not at all wearied, playing his part very well and without embarrassment.

When all was ready, Argenson, the Keeper of the Seals, remained some minutes at his desk motionless, loking down, and the fire which sprang from his eyes seemed to burn every breast. An extreme silence eloquently announced the fear, the attention, the trouble, and the curiosity of all the expectants. The Parliament, which under the deceased King had often summoned this same Argenson, and as lieutenant of police had often given him its orders, he standing uncovered at the bar of the house;—the Parliament, which since the regency had displayed its ill-will towards him so far as to excite public remark, and which still detained prisoners and papers to vex him; this Chief-President so superior to him, so haughty, so proud of his Duc du Maine; this Lamoignon, who had boasted he would have him hanged at his Chamber of Justice, where he had so completely dishonoured himself;—this Parliament and all saw him clad in the ornaments of the chief office of the robe, presiding over them, effacing them, and entering upon his functions to teach them their duty, to read them a public lesson the first time he found himself at their head! These vain presidents were seen turning their looks from a man who imposed so strongly upon their pride, and who annihilated their arrogance in the place even whence they drew it, and rendered them stupid by regards they could not sustain.

After the Keeper of the Seals (according to the manner of the preachers) had accustomed himself to this august audience, he uncovered himself, rose, mounted

to the King, knelt before the steps of the throne, by the side of the middle of the steps, where the grand chamberlain was lying upon cushions, and took the King's orders, descended, placed himself in his chair and covered himself. Let us say it once for all, he performed the same ceremony at the commencement of each business, and likewise before and after taking the opinion upon each; at the bar of Justice neither he nor the chamberlain ever speaks otherwise to the King; and every time he went to the King on this occasion the Regent rose and approached him to hear and suggest the orders. Having returned back into his place, he opened, after some moments of silence, this great scene by a discourse. The report of the Bed of Justice, made by the Parliament and printed, which is in the hands of everybody, renders it unnecessary for me to give the discourse of the Keeper of the Seals, that of the Chief-President, those of the King's people, and the different papers that were read and registered. I will simply content myself with some observations. This first discourse, the reading of the letters of the Keeper of the Seals, and the speech of the Advocate-General Blancmesnil which followed, the opinions taken, the order given, sometimes reiterated to keep the two double doors open, did not surprise anybody; served only as the preface to all the rest; to sharpen curiosity more and more as the moment approached in which it was to be satisfied.

This first act finished, the second was announced by the discourse of the Keeper of the Seals, the force of which penetrated all the Parliament. General consternation spread itself over their faces. Scarcely one of

the members dared to speak to his neighbour. I remarked that the Abbé Pucelle, who although only counsellor-clerk, was upon the forms in front of me, stood, so that he might hear better every time the Keeper of the Seals spoke. Bitter grief, obviously full of vexation, obscured the visage of the Chief-President. Shame and confusion were painted there.

After the vote, and when the Keeper of the Seals had pronounced, I saw the principal members of the Parliament in commotion. The Chief-President was about to speak. He did so by uttering the remonstrance of the Parliament, full of the most subtle and impudent malice against the Regent, and of insolence against the King. The villain trembled, nevertheless, in pronouncing it. His voice broken, his eyes constrained, his flurry and confusion, contradicted the venomous words he uttered; libations he could not abstain from offering to himself and his company. This was the moment when I relished, with delight utterly impossible to express, the sight of these haughty lawyers (who had dared to refuse us the salutation),* prostrated upon their knees, and rendering, at our feet, homage to the throne, whilst we sat covered upon elevated seats, at the side of that same throne. These situations and these postures, so widely disproportioned, plead of themselves with all the force of evidence, the cause of those who are really and truly *laterales regis* against this *vas electum* of the third estate. My eyes fixed, glued, upon these haughty bourgeois, with their uncovered heads humili-

* In the moment of triumph, Saint-Simon, with amiable simplicity, allows us to see on what points he principally laid stress. His exultation over the third estate is very characteristic. It shows how inaccessible even sensible men of his order were at that time to any idea of progress.

ated to the level of our feet, traversed the chief members kneeling or standing, and the ample folds of those fur robes of rabbit-skin that would imitate ermine, which waved at each long and redoubled genuflexion; genuflexions which only finished by command of the King.

The remonstrance being finished, the Keeper of the Seals mentioned to the King their wishes, asking further opinions; took his place again; cast his eyes on the Chief-President, and said: *The King wishes to be obeyed, and obeyed immediately.*

This grand speech was a thunder-bolt which overturned councillors and presidents in the most marked manner. All of them lowered their heads, and the majority kept them lowered for a long time. The rest of the spectators, except the marshals of France, appeared little affected by this desolation.

But this—an ordinary triumph—was nothing to that which was to follow. After an interval of some few minutes, the Keeper of the Seals went up again to the King, returned to his place, and remained there in silence some little time. Then everybody clearly saw that the Parliamentary affair being finished, something else must be in the wind. Some thought that a dispute which the Dukes had had with the Parliament, concerning one of its usurpations, was now to be settled in our favour. Others who had noticed the absence of the bastards, guessed it was something that affected them; but nobody divined what, much less its extent.

At last the Keeper of the Seals opened his mouth, and in his first sentence announced the fall of one brother and the preservation of the other. The effect

of this upon every one was inexpressible. However occupied I might be in containing mine, I lost nothing. Astonishment prevailed over every other sentiment. Many appeared glad, either from hatred to the Duc du Maine, or from affection for the Comte de Toulouse; several were in consternation. The Chief-President lost all countenance; his visage, so self-sufficient and so audacious, was seized with a convulsive movement; the excess alone of his rage kept him from swooning. It was even worse at the reading of the declaration. Each word was legislative and decreed a fresh fall. The attention was general; every one was motionless, so as not to lose a word; all eyes were fixed upon the *greffier* who was reading. A third of this reading over, the Chief-President, gnashing the few teeth left in his head, rested his forehead upon his stick that he held in both hands, and in this singular and marked position finished listening to the Declaration, so overwhelming for him, so resurrectionary for us.

Yet, as for me, I was dying with joy. I was so oppressed that I feared I should swoon; my heart dilated to excess, and no longer found room to beat. The violence I did myself, in order to let nothing escape me, was infinite; and, nevertheless, this torment was delicious. I compared the years and the time of servitude; the grievous days, when dragged at the tail of the Parliamentary car as a victim, I had served as a triumph for the bastards; the various steps by which they had mounted to the summit above our heads; I compared them, I say, to this court of justice and of rule, to this frightful fall which, at the same time, raised us by the force of the shock. I thanked myself that it was

through me this had been brought about. I had triumphed, I was revenged; I swam in my vengeance; I enjoyed the full accomplishment of desires the most vehement and the most continuous of all my life. I was tempted to fling away all thought and care. Nevertheless, I did not fail to listen to this vivifying reading (every note of which sounded upon my heart as the bow upon an instrument), or to examine, at the same time, the impressions it made upon every one.

At the first word the Keeper of the Seals said of this affair, the eyes of the two bishop-peers met mine. Never did I see surprise equal to theirs, or so marked a transport of joy. I had not been able to speak to them on account of the distance of our places; and they could not resist the movement which suddenly seized them. I swallowed through my eyes a delicious draught of their joy, and turned away my glance from theirs, lest I should succumb beneath this increase of delight. I no longer dared to look at them.

The reading finished, the other declaration in favour of the Comte de Toulouse was immediately commenced by the *greffier*, according to the command of the Keeper of the Seals, who had given them to him both together. It seemed to complete the confusion of the Chief-President and the friends of the Duc du Maine, by the contrast between the treatment of the two brothers.

After the Advocate-General had spoken, the Keeper of the Seals mounted to the King, with the opinions of the Princes of the Blood; then came to the Duc de Sully and me. Fortunately I had more memory than he had, or wished to have; therefore it was exactly my affair. I presented to him my hat with a bunch of

feathers in the front, in an express manner very marked, saying to him loudly enough: "No, Monsieur, we cannot be judges; we are parties to the cause, and we have only to thank the King for the justice he renders us."

He smiled and made an excuse. I pushed him away before the Duc de Sully had time to open his mouth; and looking round I saw with pleasure that my refusal had been marked by everybody. The Keeper of the Seals retired as he came, and without taking the opinions of the peers, or of the bishop-peers, went to the marshals of France; thence descended to the Chief-President and to the presidents *à mortier*, and so to the rest of the lower seats; after which, having been to the King and returned to his place, he pronounced the decree of registration, and thus put the finishing touch to my joy.

Immediately after M. le Duc rose, and having made his reverences to the King forgot to sit down and cover himself to speak, according to the uninterrupted right and usage of the peers of France; therefore not one of us rose. He made, then, slowly and uncovered, the speech which has been printed at the end of the preceding ones, and read it not very intelligibly because his organ was not favourable. As soon as he had finished, M. le Duc d'Orléans rose, and committed the same fault. He said, also standing and uncovered, that the request of M. le Duc appeared to him just; and after some praises added, that M. le Duc du Maine was now reduced to the rank given to him by his peerage, M. le Maréchal de Villeroy, his senior, could no longer remain under him, which was a new and very strong reason in addition to those M. le Duc had alleged.

This request had carried to the highest point the astonishment of the assembly and the despair of the Chief-President, and the handful of people who appeared by their embarrassment to be interested in the Duc du Maine. The Maréchal de Villeroy, without knitting his brow, had a disturbed look, and the eyes of the chief accuser oftener were inundated with tears. I was not able to distinguish well his cousin and intimate friend the Maréchal d'Huxelles, who screened himself beneath the vast brim of his hat, thrust over his eyes, and who did not stir. The Chief-President, stunned by this last thunder-bolt, elongated his face so surprisingly, that I thought for a moment his chin had fallen upon his knees.

However, the Keeper of the Seals having called upon the King's people to speak, they replied that they had not heard the proposition of M. le Duc, therefore his paper was passed to them from hand to hand, during which the Keeper of the Seals repeated very kindly what the Regent had added upon the seniority of the Maréchal de Villeroy over the Duc du Maine. Blancmesnil merely threw his eyes upon the paper of M. le Duc, and spoke, after which the Keeper of the Seals put it to the vote. I gave mine loud enough, and said, " As for this affair I vote with all my heart for giving the superintendence of the King's education to M. le Duc."

The votes being taken, the Keeper of the Seals called the chief *greffier*, ordered him to bring his paper and his little bureau near his, so as to do all at once; and in presence of the King register everything that had been read and resolved, and signed also. This was done without any difficulty, according to forms, under the

eyes of the Keeper of the Seals, who never raised them: but as there were five or six documents to register they took up a long time.

I had well observed the King when his education was in question, and I remarked in him no sort of alteration, change, or constraint. This was the last act of the drama: he was quite lively now the registrations commenced. However, as there were no more speeches to occupy him, he laughed with those near, amused himself with everything, even remarking that the Duc de Louvigny had on a velvet coat, and laughed at the heat he must feel, and all this with grace. This indifference for M. du Maine struck everybody, and publicly contradicted what his partisans tried to publish, viz., that his eyes had been red, but that neither at the Bed of Justice, nor since, he had dared to show his trouble. The truth is he had his eyes dry and serene the whole time, and pronounced the name of the Duc du Maine only once since, which was after dinner the same day, when he asked where he had gone, with a very indifferent air, without saying a word more, then or since, or naming his children, who took little trouble to see him; and when they went it was in order to have even in his presence their little court apart, and to divert themselves among themselves. As for the Duc du Maine, either from policy or because he thought it not yet time, he only saw the King in the morning, sometimes in his bed, and not at all during the rest of the day, except when obliged by his functions.

During the registration I gently passed my eyes over the whole assembly, and though I constantly constrained them, I could not resist the temptation to in-

demnify myself upon the Chief-President; I perseveringly overwhelmed him, therefore, a hundred different times during the sitting, with my hard-hitting regards. Insult, contempt, disdain, triumph, were darted at him from my eyes, and pierced him to the very marrow: often he lowered his eyes when he caught my gaze: once or twice he raised his upon me, and I took pleasure in annoying him by sly but malicious smiles which completed his vexation. I bathed myself in his rage, and amused myself by making him feel it. I sometimes played with him by pointing him out to my two neighbours when he could perceive this movement; in a word, I pressed upon him without mercy, as heavily as I could.

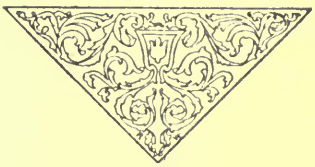
At last the registration finished, the King descended the throne, and was followed by the Regent, the two Princes of the Blood, and the necessary gentlemen of the suite. At the same time the Marshals of France descended, and while the King traversed the room, accompanied by the deputation which had received him, they passed between the seats of the councillors opposite us, to follow him to the door by which his Majesty departed: and at the same time the two bishop-peers, passing before the throne, came to put themselves at our head, and squeezed my hands and my head (in passing before me) with warm gratification.

We followed them two by two according to seniority, and went straight forward to the door. The Parliament began to move directly afterwards. Place was made for us to the steps. The crowd, the people, the display contrasted our conversation and our joy. I was sorry for it.

I immediately gained my coach, which I found near, and which took me skilfully out of the court, so that I met with no check, and in a quarter of an hour after leaving the sitting, I was at home.

I had need of a little rest, for pleasure even is fatigue, and happiness, pure and untroubled as it may be, wearies the spirit. I entered my house, then, at about two o'clock in the afternoon, intending to repose myself, and in order to do so in security, I closed my door to everybody.

Alas! I had not been many minutes at home when I was called away to perform one of the most painful and annoying commissions it was ever my ill fortune to be charged with.



CHAPTER VI.

My Return Home—Wanted for a New Commission—Go to the Palais Royal—A Cunning Page—My Journey to Saint-Cloud—My Reception—Interview with the Duchesse d'Orléans — Her Grief — My Embarrassment — Interview with Madame—Her Triumph—Letter of the Duchesse d'Orléans —She Comes to Paris—Quarrels with the Regent.

A LITTLE while before leaving the Cabinet of the Council for the Bed of Justice, M. le Duc d'Orléans had begged me to go to the Palais Royal with the Keeper of the Seals immediately after the ceremony had ended. As I saw that nothing had been undertaken, I thought myself free of this conference, and was glad to avoid a new proof that I had been in a secret which had excited envy. I went, therefore, straight home, arriving between two and three. I found at the foot of the steps the Duc d'Humières, Louville, and all my family, even my mother, whom curiosity had drawn from her chamber, which she had not left since the commencement of the winter. We remained below in my apartment, where, while changing my coat and my shirt, I replied to their eager questions; when, lo! M. de Biron, who had forced my door which I had closed against everybody, in order to obtain a little repose, was announced.

Biron put his head in at my door, and begged to be allowed to say a word to me. I passed, half-dressed, into my chamber with him. He said that M. le Duc d'Orléans had expected me at the Palais Royal immediately after the Bed of Justice, and was surprised I had not appeared. He added that there was no great harm done; and that the Regent wished to see me now, in order that I might execute a commission for him. I asked Biron what it was? He replied that it was to go to Saint-Clere to announce what had taken place to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans!

This was a thunder-bolt for me. I disputed with Biron, who exhorted me to lose no time, but to go at once to the Palais Royal, where I was expected with impatience. I returned into my cabinet with him, so changed in aspect that Madame de Saint-Simon was alarmed. I explained what was the matter, and after Biron had chatted a moment, and again pressed me to set out at once, he went away to eat his dinner. Ours was served. I waited a little time in order to recover myself, determined not to vex M. le Duc d'Orléans by dawdling, took some soup and an egg, and went off to the Palais Royal.

It was in vain that, using all the eloquence I could command and all the liberty I dared employ, I protested against being employed for this duty. I represented to the Regent what an ill-chosen messenger I should be to carry to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans news of the disgrace of her brother the Duc du Maine; I, who had always been such an open and declared enemy to the bastards! I represented to him that people would say I went on purpose to triumph over her

at what had been done, and that she herself would look upon my presence as a kind of insult. In vain! in vain! were my arguments, my entreaties, my instances. M. le Duc d'Orléans had determined that I should go on this errand, and go I must.

As I left his house to execute my luckless commission, I found one of Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans' pages, booted and spurred, who had just arrived from Saint-Cloud. I begged him to return at once, at a gallop, and say, on arriving, to the Duchesse Sforze (one of Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans' ladies) that I should be there soon with a message from M. le Duc d'Orléans, and to ask her to meet me as I descended from my coach. My object was to charge her with the message I had to deliver, and not to see Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans at all. But my poor prudence was confounded by that of the page, who had not less than I. He took good care not to be the bearer of such ill news as he had just learned at the Palais Royal, and which was now everywhere public. He contented himself with saying that I was coming, sent by M. le Duc d'Orléans, spoke not a word to the Duchesse Sforze, and disappeared at once. This is what I afterwards learned, and what I saw clearly enough on arriving at Saint-Cloud.

I went there at a gentle trot, in order to give time to the page to arrive before me, and to the Duchesse Sforze to receive me. During the journey I applauded myself for my address, but feared lest I should be obliged to see Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans after Madame Sforze. I could not imagine that Saint-Cloud was in ignorance of what had occurred, and, neverthe-

less, I was in an agony that cannot be expressed, and this increased as I approached the end of my journey. If it is disagreeable to announce unpleasant news to the indifferent, how much more is it to announce them to the deeply interested!

Penetrated with this dolorous sentiment I arrived in the grand court of Saint-Cloud, and saw everybody at the windows, running from all parts. I alighted, and asked the first comer to lead me to the Duchesse Sforze, the position of whose apartments I am unacquainted with. I was told that Madame Sforze was in the chapel with Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. Then I asked for the Maréchale de Rochefort, and after a time she arrived, hobbling along with her stick. I disputed with her, wishing to see Madame Sforze, who was not to be found. I was anxious at all events to go to her room and wait, but the inexorable Maréchale pulled me by the arm, asking what news I brought. Worn out at last, I said, "News? news that you are acquainted with."

"How, acquainted with?" she asked. "We know nothing, except that a Bed of Justice has been held, and we are expiring to know why, and what has passed there."

My astonishment at this ignorance was extreme, and I made her swear and repeat four times over that nothing was known at Saint-Cloud. I told her thereupon what had happened, and she, in her turn, astonished, almost fell backwards! But where was Madame Sforze? she came not, and do what I must, say what I might, I was forced to carry my message to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. I was sorely loth to do so, but

was dragged by the hand almost as a sheep is led to the slaughter.

I stood before Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans after having passed through an apartment filled with her people, fear painted upon all their faces. I saluted her; but, oh! how differently from my usual manner! She did not perceive this at first, and begged me, with a cheerful natural air, to approach her; but seeing my trouble, she exclaimed, "Good Heavens, Monsieur, what a face you wear! What news bring you?"

Seeing that I remained silent and motionless, she became more moved, and repeated her questions. I advanced a few steps towards her, and at her third appeal, I said: "Madame, you know nothing then?"

"No, Monsieur; I simply know that there has been a Bed of Justice: what has passed there I am quite ignorant of."

"Ah, Madame," I replied, half turning away; "I am more unhappy, then, than I thought to be."

"What is the matter?" exclaimed she; "what has happened?" (rising and sitting bolt upright on the sofa she was stretched upon). "Come near and sit down!"

I approached; stated that I was in despair. She, more and more moved, said to me, "But speak; better to learn bad news from one's friend than from others."

This remark pierced me to the heart, and made me sensible of the grief I was going to inflict upon her. I summoned up courage, and I told her all.

The tears of Madame la Duchesse d'Orleans flowed abundantly at my recital. She did not answer a word, uttered no cry, but wept bitterly. She pointed to a

seat and I sat down upon it, my eyes during several instants fixed upon the floor. Afterwards I said that M. le Duc d'Orléans, who had rather forced upon me this commission, than charged me with it, had expressly commanded me to tell her that he had very strong proofs in his hands against M. du Maine; that he had kept them back a long time, but could no longer do so now. She gently replied to me that her brother was very unfortunate and shortly afterwards asked if I knew what his crime was. I said that M. le Duc d'Orléans had not told me; and that I had not dared to question him upon a subject of this nature, seeing that he was not inclined to talk of it.

More tears shortly afterwards filled her eyes. Her brother must be very criminal, she said, to be so treated.

I remained some time upon my seat, not daring to raise my eyes, in the most painful state possible, and not knowing whether to remain or go away. At last I acquainted her with my difficulty; said I fancied she would like to be alone some little time before giving me her orders, but that respect kept me equally in suspense as to whether I should go or stay. After a short silence, she said she should like to see her women. I rose, sent them to her, and said to them, if her Royal Highness asked for me, I should be with the Duchesse Sforze, or the Maréchale Rochefort; but I could find neither of these two ladies, so I went up to Madame.

She rose as soon as I appeared, and said to me, with eagerness, "Well, Monsieur, what news? At the same time her ladies retired, and I was left alone with her.

I commenced by an excuse for not coming to see

her first, as was my duty, on the ground that M. le Duc d'Orléans had assured me she would not object to my commencing with Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. She did not object, in fact, but asked me for my news with much eagerness. I told her what had happened. Joy spread over her face. She replied with a mighty, "At last!" which she repeated, saying, her son long since ought to have struck this blow, but that he was too good. I mentioned to her that she was standing, but for politeness she remained so. After some further talk she begged me to state all the details of this celebrated morning.

I again recalled to her mind that she was standing, and represented that what she desired to learn would take a long time to relate; but her ardour to know it was extreme. I began then my story, commencing with the very morning. At the end of a quarter of an hour, Madame seated herself, but with the greatest politeness. I was nearly an hour with her, continually telling and sometimes replying to her questions. She was delighted at the humiliation of the Parliament, and of the bastards, and that her son had at last displayed some firmness.

At this point the Maréchale de Rochefort entered, and summoned me back to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. I found that princess extended upon the sofa where I had left her, an inkstand upon her knees and a pen in her hand. She had commenced a reply to M. le Duc d'Orléans, but had not been able to finish it. Looking at me with an air of gentleness and of friendship, she observed, "Tears escape me; I have begged you to descend in order to render me a service; my

hand is unsteady, I pray you finish my writing for me;" and she handed to me the inkstand and her letter. I took them, and she dictated to me the rest of the epistle, that I at once added to what she had written.

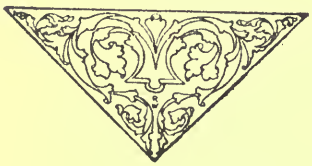
I was infinitely amazed at the conciseness and appropriateness of the expressions she readily found, in the midst of her violent emotion, her sobs, and her tears. She finished by saying that she was going to Montmartre to mourn the misfortunes of her brother, and pray God for his prosperity. I shall regret all my life I did not transcribe this letter. All its expressions were so worthy, so fitting, so measured, everything being according to truth and duty; and the letter, in fact, being so perfectly well written, that although I remember it roughly, I dare not give it, for fear of spoiling it. What a pity that a mind capable of such self-possession, at such a moment, should have become valueless from its leaning towards illegitimacy.

After this I had another interview with Madame, and a long talk with my sure and trusty friend Madame Sforze. Then I set out for Paris, went straight to the Palais Royal, and found M. le Duc d'Orléans with Madame la Duchesse de Berry. He was delighted when he heard what Madame had said respecting him; but he was not particularly pleased when he found that Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans (who after telling me she would go to Montmartre, had changed her mind) was coming to the Palais Royal.

I learned afterwards that she came about half an hour after I left. At first she was all humility and sorrow, hoping to soften the Regent by this conduct. Then she passed to tears, sobs, cries, reproaches, ex-

pecting to make him by these means undo what he had done, and reinstate M. du Maine in the position he had lost. But all her efforts proving vain, she adopted another course: her sorrow turned to rage,—her tears to looks of anger. Still in vain. She could gain nothing; vex and annoy M. le Duc d'Orléans as she might by her conduct. At last, finding there was no remedy to be had, she was obliged to endure her sorrow as best she might.

As for me, I was erased entirely from her books. She looked upon me as the chief cause of what had occurred, and would not see me. I remained ever afterwards at variance with her. I had nothing to reproach myself with, however, so that her enmity did not very deeply penetrate me.



CHAPTER VII.

Intrigues of M. du Maine—And of Cellamare, the Spanish Ambassador — Monteléon and Portocarrero — Their Despatches—How Signed—The Conspiracy Revealed—Conduct of the Regent—Arrest of Cellamare—His House Searched —The Regency Council—Speech of the Duc d'Orléans—Resolutions Come To—Arrests—Relations with Spain—Alberoni and Saint-Aignan—Their Quarrel—Escape of Saint-Aignan.

IT was scarcely to be expected, perhaps, that M. du Maine would remain altogether quiet under the disgrace which had been heaped upon him by the proceedings at the Bed of Justice. Soon indeed we found that he had been secretly working out the most perfidious and horrible schemes for a long time before that assembly; and that after his fall, he gave himself up with redoubled energy to his devilish devices.

Towards the end of this memorable year, 1718, it was discovered that Alberoni, by means of Cellamare, Spanish Ambassador at our Court, was preparing a plot against the Regent. The scheme was nothing less than to throw all the realm into revolt against the government of M. le Duc d'Orléans; to put the King of Spain at the head of the affairs of France, with a council and ministers named by him, and a lieutenant, who would

in fact have been regent; this self-same lieutenant to be no other than the Duc du Maine!

This precious plot was, fortunately, discovered before it had come to maturity. Had such not happened, the consequences might have been very serious, although they could scarcely have been fatal. The conspirators counted upon the Parliaments of Paris and of Brittany, upon all the old Court accustomed to the yoke of the bastards, and to that of Madame de Maintenon; and they flung about promises with an unsparing hand to all who supported them. After all, it must be admitted, however, that the measures they took and the men they secured, were strangely unequal to the circumstances of the case, when the details became known; in fact, there was a general murmur of surprise among the public, at the contemptible nature of the whole affair.

But let me relate the circumstances accompanying the discovery of M. du Maine's pitiable treachery.

Cellamare, as I have said, was Spanish Ambassador at our Court. He had been one of the chief movers in the plot. He had excited, as much as lay in his power, discontent against the Regent's government; he had done his best to embroil France with Spain; he had worked heart and soul with M. du Maine, to carry out the common end they had in view. So much preparation had been made; so much of the treason train laid, that at last it became necessary to send to Alberoni a full and clear account of all that had been done, so as to paint exactly the position of affairs, and determine the measures that remained to be taken. But how to send such an account as this? To trust it to the ordinary channels of communication would have been to

run a great risk of exposure and detection. To send it by private hand would have been suspicious, if the hand were known, and dangerous if it were not: Cellamare had long since provided for this difficulty.

He had caused a young ecclesiastic to be sent from Spain, who came to Paris as though for his pleasure. There he was introduced to young Monteléon, son of a former ambassador at our Court, who had been much liked. The young ecclesiastic was called the Abbé Portocarrero, a name regarded with favour in France. Monteléon came from the Hague, and was going to Madrid. Portocarrero came from Madrid, and was going back there. What more natural than that the two young men should travel in company? What less natural than that the two young men, meeting each other by pure accident in Paris, should be charged by the ambassador with any packet of consequence, he having his own couriers, and the use, for the return journey, of those sent to him from Spain? In fact, it may be believed that these young people themselves were perfectly ignorant of what they were charged with, and simply believed that, as they were going to Spain, the ambassador merely seized the occasion to entrust them with some packet of no special importance.

They set out, then, at the commencement of December, furnished with passports from the King—(for Alberoni had openly caused almost a rupture between the two Courts)—with a Spanish banker, who had been established in England, where he had become bankrupt for a large amount, so that the English government had obtained permission from the Regent to arrest him, if they could, anywhere in France. It will sometimes

be perceived that I am ill-instructed in this affair; but I can only tell what I know: and as for the rest, I give my conjectures. In fact, the Abbé Dubois kept everybody so much in the dark, that even M. le Duc d'Orléans was not informed of all.

Whether the arrival of the Abbé Portocarrero in Paris, and his short stay there, seemed suspicious to the Abbé Dubois and his emissaries, or whether he had corrupted some of the principal people of the Spanish Ambassador and this Court, and learned that these young men were charged with a packet of importance; whether there was no other mystery than the bad company of the bankrupt banker, and that the anxiety of Dubois to oblige his friends the English, induced him to arrest the three travellers and seize their papers, lest the banker should have confided his to the young men, I know not: but however it may have been, it is certain that the Abbé Dubois arrested the three travellers at Poitiers, and carried off their papers, a courier bringing these papers to him immediately afterwards.

Great things sometimes spring from chance. The courier from Poitiers entered the house of the Abbé Dubois just as the Regent entered the opera. Dubois glanced over the papers, and went and related the news of this capture to M. le Duc d'Orléans, as he left his box. This prince, who was accustomed to shut himself up with his roués at that hour, did so with a carelessness to which everything yielded, under pretext that Dubois had not had sufficient time to examine all the papers. The first few hours of the morning he was not himself. His head, still confused by the fumes of the wine and by the undigested supper of the previous

night, was not in a state to understand anything, and the secretaries of state have often told me that was the time they could make him sign anything. This was the moment taken by Dubois to acquaint the Regent with as much or as little of the contents of the papers, as he thought fit. The upshot of their interview was, that the Abbé was allowed by the Duc d'Orléans to have the control of this matter entirely in his own hands.

The day after the arrival of the courier from Poitiers, Cellamare, informed of what had occurred, but who flattered himself that the presence of the banker had caused the arrest of the young men, and the seizure of their papers, hid his fears under a very tranquil bearing, and went, at one o'clock in the day, to M. le Blanc, to ask for a packet of letters he had entrusted to Portocarrero and Monteléon on their return to Spain. Le Blanc (who had had his lesson prepared beforehand by the Abbé Dubois) replied that the packet had been seen; that it contained important things, and that, far from being restored to him, he himself must go back to his hotel under escort, to meet there M. l'Abbé Dubois. The ambassador, who felt that such a compliment would not be attempted without means having been prepared to put it in execution, made no difficulty, and did not lose for a moment his address or his tranquillity.

During the three hours, at least, passed in his house, in the examination of all his bureaux and his boxes, and his papers, Cellamare, like a man who fears nothing, and who is sure of his game, treated M. le Blanc very civilly; as for the Abbé Dubois, with whom he felt he had no measure to keep (all the plot being dis-

covered), he affected to treat him with the utmost disdain. Thus Le Blanc, taking hold of a little casket, Cellamare cried, "M. le Blanc, M. le Blanc, leave that alone; that is not for you; that is for the Abbé Dubois" (who was then present). Then looking at him, he added, "He has been a pander all his life, and there are nothing but women's letters there."

The Abbé Dubois burst out laughing, not daring to grow angry.

When all was examined, the King's seal, and that of the ambassador, were put upon all the bureaux and the caskets which contained papers. The Abbé Dubois and Le Blanc went off together to give an account of their proceedings to the Regent, leaving a company of musketeers to guard the ambassador and his household.

I heard of the capture effected at Poitiers, at home, the morning after it occurred, without knowing anything of those arrested. As I was at table, a servant came to me from M. le Duc d'Orléans, summoning me to a council of the regency, at four o'clock that day. As it was not the usual day for the council, I asked what was the matter. The messenger was surprised at my ignorance, and informed me that the Spanish ambassador was arrested. As soon as I had eaten a morsel, I quitted my company, and hastened to the Palais Royal, where I learnt from M. le Duc d'Orléans all that I have just related. Our conversation took up time, and, when it was over, I went away to the Tuileries. I found there astonishment painted upon several faces; little groups of two, three, and four people together; and the majority struck by the importance of the arrest, and little disposed to approve it.

M. le Duc d'Orléans arrived shortly after. He had, better than any man I have ever known, the gift of speech, and without needing any preparation he said exactly what he wanted to say, neither more nor less; his expressions were just and precise, a natural grace accompanied them with an air of proper dignity, always mixed with an air of politeness. He opened the council with a discourse upon the people and the papers seized at Poitiers, the latter proving that a very dangerous conspiracy against the state was on the eve of bursting, and of which the Ambassador of Spain was the principal promoter. His Royal Highness alleged the pressing reasons which had induced him to secure the person of this ambassador, to examine his papers, and to place him under guard. He showed that the protection afforded by the law of nations did not extend to conspiracies, that ambassadors rendered themselves unworthy of that protection when they took part in them, still more when they excited people against the state where they dwelt. He cited several examples of ambassadors arrested for less. He explained the orders he had given so as to inform all the foreign ministers in Paris of what had occurred, and had ordered Dubois to render an account to the council of what he had done at the ambassador's, and offered to read the letters from Cellamare to Cardinal Alberoni, found among the papers brought from Poitiers.

The Abbé Dubois stammered out a short and ill-arranged recital of what he had done at the ambassador's house, and dwelt upon the importance of the discovery and upon that of the conspiracy as far as already known. The two letters he read left me no doubt that Cellamare

was at the head of this affair, and that Alberoni had entered into it as far as he. We were much scandalised with the expressions in these letters against M. le Duc d'Orléans, who was in no way spared.

This prince spoke again, to say he did not suspect the King or Queen of Spain to be mixed up in this affair, but that he attributed it all to the passion of Alberoni, and that of his ambassador to please him, and that he would ask for justice from their Catholic Majesties. He showed the importance of neglecting no means in order to clear up an affair so capital to the repose and tranquillity of the kingdom, and finished by saying, that until he knew more he would name nobody who was mixed up in the matter. All this speech was much applauded, and I believe there were some among the company who felt greatly relieved when they heard the Regent say he would name nobody nor would he allow suspicions to be circulated until all was unravelled.

Nevertheless the next day, Saturday, the 10th of December, more than one arrest was made. Others took place a few days afterwards.

On Tuesday, the 13th of December, all the foreign ministers went to the Palais Royal, according to custom; not one made any complaint of what had happened. A copy of the two letters read at the council was given to them. In the afternoon, Cellamare was placed in a coach with a captain of cavalry and a captain of dragoons, chosen to conduct him to Blois, until Saint-Aignan, our ambassador in Spain, should arrive in France.

The position of our ambassador, Saint-Aignan, at Madrid, was, as may be imagined, by no means agree-

able. The two courts were just upon the point of an open rupture, thanks to the hatred Alberoni had made it a principle to keep up in Spain against M. le Duc d'Orléans, by crying down his actions, his government, his personal conduct, his most innocent acts, and by rendering suspicious even his favourable proceedings with regard to Spain. Alberoni for a long time had ceased to keep on even decent terms with Saint-Aignan, scandalising thus even the most unfavourably disposed towards France. Saint-Aignan only maintained his position by the sagacity of his conduct, and he was delighted when he received orders to return to France. He asked for his parting audience, and meanwhile bade adieu to all his friends and to all the Court. Alberoni, who every moment expected decisive news from Cellamare respecting the conspiracy, wished to remain master of our ambassador, so as, in case of accident, to have a useful hostage in his hands as security for his own ambassador. He put off therefore this parting audience under various pretexts. At last, Saint-Aignan, pressed by his reiterated orders (orders all the more positive because suspicion had already begun to foresee a disturbance ever alarming), spoke firmly to the Cardinal, and declared that if this audience were not at once accorded to him, he would do without it! Therefore the Cardinal, in anger, replied with a menace, that he knew well enough how to hinder him from acting thus.

Saint-Aignan wisely contained himself; but seeing to what sort of a man he was exposed, and judging rightly why he was detained at Madrid, took his measures so secretly and so well, that he set out the same night,

with his most necessary equipage, gained ground and arrived at the foot of the Pyrenees without being overtaken and arrested; two occurrences which he expected at every moment, knowing that Alberoni was a man who would stick at nothing.

Saint-Aignan, already so far advanced, did not deem it advisable to expose himself any longer, bothered as he would be among the mountains by his carriages. He and the Duchess, his wife, followed by a waiting-woman and three valets, with a very trusty guide, mounted upon mules and rode straight for Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port without stopping a moment more on the road than was necessary. He sent on his equipages to Pampeluna at a gentle pace, and placed in his carriage an intelligent *valet de chambre* and a waiting-woman, with orders to pass themselves off as the ambassador and ambassadress of France, and in case they were arrested to cry out a good deal. The arrest did not fail to happen. The people despatched by Alberoni soon came up with the carriage. The pretended ambassador and ambassadress played their parts very well, and they who had arrested them did not doubt for a moment they had made a fine capture, sending news of it to Madrid, and keeping the prisoners in Pampeluna, to which the party returned.

This device saved M. and Madame de Saint-Aignan, and gave them means to reach Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port; as soon as they arrived there they sent for assistance and carriages to Bayonne, which they gained in safety, and reposed after their fatigue. The Duc de Saint-Aignan sent word of all this to M. le Duc d'Orléans by a courier, and, at this arrival in Bayonne, de-

spatched a message to the Governor of Pampeluna, begging him to send on his equipages. Alberoni's people were very much ashamed of having been duped, but Alberoni when he heard of it flew into a furious rage, and cruelly punished the mistake. The equipages were sent on to Bayonne.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Regent Sends for Me—Guilt of the Duc du Maine—Proposed Arrest—Discussion on the Prison to be Chosen—The Arrest—His Dejection—Arrest of the Duchess—Her Rage—Taken to Dijon—Other Arrests—Conduct of the Comte de Toulouse—The Faux-Sauniers—Imprisonment of the Duc and Duchesse du Maine—Their Sham Disagreement—Their Liberation—Their Reconciliation.

TO return now to what took place at Paris.

On Sunday, the 25th of December, Christmas Day, M. le Duc d'Orléans sent for me to come and see him at the Palais Royal, about four o'clock in the afternoon. I went accordingly, and after despatching some business with him, other people being present, I followed him into his little winter cabinet at the end of the little gallery, M. le Duc being present.

After a moment of silence, the Regent told me to see if no one was outside in the gallery, and if the door at the end was closed. I went out, found the door shut, and no one near.

This being ascertained, M. le Duc d'Orléans said that we should not be surprised to learn that M. and Madame du Maine had been mixed up all along with this affair of the Spanish Ambassador Cellamare; that he had written proofs of this, and that the project was

exactly that which I have already described. He added, that he had strictly forbidden the Keeper of the Seals, the Abbé Dubois, and Le Blanc, who alone knew of this project, to give the slightest sign of their knowledge, recommended to me the same secrecy, and the same precaution; and finished by saying that he wished, above all things, to consult M. le Duc and me upon the course he ought to adopt.

M. le Duc at once went to the point and said M. and Madame du Maine must at once be arrested and put where they could cause no apprehension. I supported this opinion, and showed the perilous annoyances that might arise if this step were not instantly taken; as much for the purpose of striking terror into the conspirators, as for disconcerting their schemes. I added that there was not a moment to lose, and that it was better to incur uncertain danger than to wait for that which was certain.

Our advice was accepted by M. le Duc d'Orléans, after some little debate. But now the question arose, where are the prisoners to be put? The Bastille and Vincennes both seemed to me too near to Paris. Several places were named without one appearing to suit. At last, M. le Duc d'Orléans mentioned Dourlens. I stopped him short at the name, and recommended it warmly. I knew the governor, Charost, and his son to be men of probity, faithful, virtuous, and much attached to the state. Upon this it was agreed to send M. du Maine to Dourlens.

Then we had to fix upon a place for his wife, and this was more difficult; there were her sex, her fiery temper, her courage, her daring,—all to be considered;

whereas, her husband, we knew, so dangerous as a hidden enemy, was contemptible without his mask, and would fall into the lowest state of dejection in prison, trembling all over with fear of the scaffold, and attempting nothing; his wife, on the contrary, being capable of attempting anything.

Various places discussed, M. le Duc d'Orléans smiled, and proposed the château of Dijon! Now, the joke of this suggestion was, that Dijon belonged to M. le Duc, and that he was nephew of Madame du Maine, whom the Regent proposed to lock up there! M. le Duc smiled also, and said it was a little too bad to make him the gaoler of his aunt! But all things considered, it was found that a better choice than Dijon could not be made, so M. le Duc gave way. I fancy he had held out more for form's sake than for any other reason. These points settled, we separated, to meet another time, in order to make the final arrangements for the arrest.

We met accordingly, the Monday and Tuesday following, and deliberated with the same secrecy as before. On Wednesday we assembled again to put the final touch to our work. Our conference was long, and the result of it was, that M. and Madame du Maine were to be arrested on the morrow; all the necessary arrangements were made, and, as we thought, with the utmost secrecy. Nevertheless, the orders given to the regiment of the guards, and to the musketeers somehow or other transpired during the evening, and gave people reason to believe that something considerable was in contemplation. On leaving the conference, I arranged with Le Blanc that, when the blow was

struck, he should inform me by simply sending a servant to inquire after my health.

The morrow, about ten o'clock in the morning, having noiselessly and without show placed the body-guard around Sceaux, La Billardière, lieutenant of the regiment, entered there, and arrested the Duc du Maine as he was leaving his chapel after hearing mass, and very respectfully begged him not to re-enter the house, but to mount immediately into a coach which he had brought. M. du Maine, who had expected this arrest, and who had had time to put his papers in order, made not the slightest resistance. He replied that he had anticipated this compliment for some days, and at once moved into the coach. La Billardière placed himself by his side, and in front was an exempt of the body-guards, and Favancourt, brigadier in the first company of musketeers, destined to guard him in his prison.

As these two latter persons did not appear before the Duc du Maine until the moment he entered the coach, he appeared surprised and moved to see Favancourt. He would not have been at the exempt, but the sight of the other depressed him. He asked La Billardière what this meant. Billardière could not dissimulate that Favancourt had orders to accompany him, and to remain with him in the place to which they were going. Favancourt himself took this moment to pay his compliments as best he might to the Duc du Maine, to which the Duke replied but little, and that in a civil and apprehensive manner. These proceedings conducted them to the end of the avenue of Sceaux, where the body-guards appeared. The sight of them made the Duc du Maine change colour.

Silence was but little interrupted in the coach. Now and then M. du Maine would say that he was very innocent of the accusation which had been formed against him; that he was much attached to the King, and not less so to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who could not but recognise it; and that it was very unfortunate his Royal Highness should put faith in his enemies (he never named anybody). All this was said in a broken manner, and amid many sighs; from time to time signs of the cross; low mumblings as of prayers; and plunges at each church or each cross they passed. He took his meals in the coach, ate very little, was alone at night, but with good precautions taken. He did not know until the morrow that he was going to Dourlens. He showed no emotion thereupon. All these details I learnt from Favancourt, whom I knew very well, and who was in the Musketeers when I served in that corps.

At the moment of the arrest of M. du Maine, Ancenis, captain of the body-guard, arrested the Duchesse du Maine in her house in the Rue St. Honoré. A lieutenant, and an exempt of the foot body-guards, with other troops, took possession of the house at the same time, and guarded the doors. The compliment of the Duc d'Ancenis was sharply received. Madame du Maine wished to take away some caskets. Ancenis objected. She demanded, at the least, her jewels; altercations very strong on one side, very modest on the other: but she was obliged to yield. She raged at the violence done to a person of her rank, without saying anything too disobliging to M. d'Ancenis, and without naming anybody. She delayed her departure as long as she could, despite the instances of d'Ancenis, who

at last presented his hand to her, and politely, but firmly, said she must go. She found at her door two six-horse coaches, the sight of which much shocked her. She was obliged, however, to mount. Ancenis placed himself by her side, the lieutenant and the exempt of the guard in front, two chambermaids whom she had chosen were in the other coach, with her apparel, which had been examined. The ramparts were followed, the principal streets avoided; there was no stir, and at this she could not restrain her surprise and vexation, or check a tear, declaiming by fits and starts against the violence done her. She complained of the rough coach, the indignity it cast upon her, and from time to time asked where she was being led to. She was simply told that she would sleep at Essonne, nothing more. Her three guardians maintained profound silence. At night all possible precautions were taken. When she set out the next day, the Duc d'Ancenis took leave of her, and left her to the lieutenant and to the exempt of the body-guards, with troops to conduct her. She asked where they were leading her to: he simply replied, "To Fontainebleau." The disquietude of Madame du Maine augmented as she left Paris farther behind, but when she found herself in Burgundy, and knew at last she was to go to Dijon, she stormed at a fine rate.

It was worse when she was forced to enter the castle, and found herself the prisoner of M. le Duc. Fury suffocated her. She raged against her nephew, and the horrible place chosen for her. Nevertheless, after her first transports, she returned to herself, and began to comprehend that she was in no place and no condi-

tion to play the fury. Her extreme rage she kept to herself, affected nothing but indifference for all, and disdainful security. The King's lieutenant of the castle, absolutely devoted to M. le Duc, kept her fast, and closely watched her and her chambermaids. The Prince de Dombes and the Comte d'Eu (her sons) were at the same time exiled to Eu, where a gentleman in ordinary always was near them; Mademoiselle du Maine was sent to Maubuisson.

Several other people were successively arrested and placed either in the Bastille or Vincennes. The commotion caused by the arrest and imprisonment of M. and Madame du Maine was great; many faces, already elongated by the Bed of Justice, were still further pulled out by these events. The Chief-President, D'Effiat, the Maréchal de Villeroy, the Maréchal de Villars, the Maréchal d'Euxelles, and other devoted friends of M. du Maine, were completely terrified; they did not dare to say a word; they kept out of the way; did not leave their houses except from necessity; fear was painted upon their faces. All their pride was put aside; they became polite, caressing, would have eaten out of your hand; and by this sudden change and their visible embarrassment betrayed themselves.

As for the Comte de Toulouse he remained as upright and loyal as ever. The very day of the double arrest he came to M. le Duc d'Orléans and said that he regarded the King, the Regent, and the State as one and the same thing; that he should never be wanting in his duty or in his fidelity towards them; that he was very sorry at what had happened to his brother, but that he was in no way answerable for him. The Regent

stated this to me the same day, and appeared, with reason, to be charmed with such straightforward honesty.

This arrest of M. and Madame du Maine had another effect. For some time past, a large quantity of illicit salt had been sold throughout the country. The people by whom this trade was conducted, *faux sauniers*, as they were called, travelled over the provinces in bands well armed and well organized. So powerful had they become that troops were necessary in order to capture them. There were more than five thousand *faux sauniers*, who openly carried on their traffic in Champagne and Picardy. They had become political instruments in the hands of others, being secretly encouraged and commanded by those who wished to sow trouble in the land. It could not be hidden that these *faux sauniers* were redoubtable by their valour and their arrangements; that the people were favourable to them, buying as they did from them, salt at a low price, and irritated as they were against the *gabelle* and other imposts; that these *faux sauniers* spread over all the realm, and often marching in large bands, which beat all opposed to them, were dangerous people, who incited the population by their examples to opposition against the government.

I had proposed on one occasion the abolition of the salt tax to the Regent, as a remedy for these evils; but my suggestion shared the fate of many others. It was favourably listened to, and nothing more. And meanwhile the *faux sauniers* had gone on increasing. I had no difficulty in discovering by whom they were encouraged, and the event showed I was right. Di-

rectly after the arrest of M. and Madame du Maine, the *faux sauniers* laid down their arms, asked, and obtained pardon. This prompt submission showed clearly enough by whom they had been employed, and for what reason. I had uselessly told M. le Duc d'Orléans so long before, who admitted that I was right, but did nothing. It was his usual plan.

Let me finish at once with all I shall have to say respecting M. and Madame du Maine.

They remained in their prisons during the whole of the year 1719, supplied with all the comforts and attentions befitting their state, and much less rigorously watched than at first, thanks to the easy disposition of M. le Duc d'Orléans, whose firmness yielded even more rapidly than beauty to the effects of time. The consequence of his indulgence towards the two conspirators was, that at about the commencement of the following year, 1720, they began to play a very ridiculous comedy, of which not a soul was the dupe, not even the public, nor the principal actors, nor the Regent.

The Duc and Duchesse du Maine, thanks to the perfidy of the Abbé Dubois, had had time to hide away all their papers, and to arrange together the different parts they should play. Madame du Maine, supported by her sex and birth, muffled herself up in her dignity, when replying to the questions addressed to her, of which just as many, and no more, were read to the replying counsel as pleased the Abbé Dubois; and strongly accusing Cellamare and others; protected as much as possible her friends, her husband above all, by charging herself with all; by declaring that what she had done M. du Maine had no knowledge of; and

that its object went no farther than to obtain from the Regent such reforms in his administration as were wanted.

The Duc du Maine, shorn of his rank and of his title of prince of the blood, trembled for his life. His crimes against the state,—against the blood royal,—against the person of the Regent, so long, so artfully, and so cruelly offended, troubled him all the more because he felt they deserved severe punishment. He soon, therefore, conceived the idea of screening himself beneath his wife's petticoats. His replies, and all his observations were to the same tune; perfect ignorance of everything. Therefore when the Duchess had made her confessions, and they were communicated to him, he cried out against his wife,—her madness,—her felony,—his misfortune in having a wife capable of conspiring, and daring enough to implicate him in everything without having spoken to him; making him thus a criminal without being so the least in the world; and keeping him so ignorant of her doings, that it was out of his power to stop them, to chide her, or inform M. le Duc d'Orléans if things had been pushed so far that he ought to have done so!

From that time the Duc du Maine would no longer hear talk of a woman who, without his knowledge, had cast him and his children into this abyss; and when at their release from prison, they were permitted to write and send messages to each other, he would receive nothing from her, or give any signs of life. Madame du Maine, on her side, pretended to be afflicted at this treatment; admitting, nevertheless, that she had acted wrongfully towards her husband in implicat-

ing him without his knowledge in her schemes. They were at this point when they were allowed to come near Paris. M. du Maine went to live at Clagny, a château near Versailles, built for Madame de Montespan. Madame du Maine went to Sceaux. They came separately to see M. le Duc d'Orléans at Paris, without sleeping there; both played their parts, and as the Abbé Dubois judged the time had come to take credit to himself in their eyes for finishing their disgrace, he easily persuaded M. le Duc d'Orléans to appear convinced of the innocence of M. du Maine.

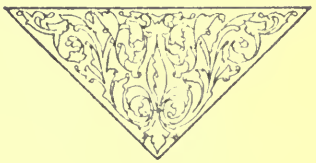
During their stay in the two country-houses abovenamed, where they saw but little company, Madame du Maine made many attempts at reconciliation with her husband, which he repelled. This farce lasted from the month of January (when they arrived at Sceaux and at Clagny) to the end of July. Then they thought the game had lasted long enough to be put an end to. They had found themselves quit of all danger so cheaply, and counted so much upon the Abbé Dubois, that they were already thinking of returning to their former considerations; and to work at this usefully, they must be in a position to see each other, and commence by establishing themselves in Paris, where they would of necessity live together.

The sham rupture had been carried to this extent, that the two sons of the Duc du Maine returned from Eu to Clagny a few days after him, did not for a long time go and see Madame du Maine, and subsequently saw her but rarely, and without sleeping under her roof.

At last the resolution being taken to put an end

to the comedy, this is how it was terminated by another.

Madame la Princesse made an appointment with the Duc du Maine at Vaugirard on the last of July, and in the house of Landais, treasurer of the artillery. She arrived there a little after him with the Duchesse du Maine, whom she left in her carriage. She said to M. du Maine she had brought a lady with her who much desired to see him. The thing was not difficult to understand; the piece had been well studied. The Duchesse du Maine was sent for. The apparent reconcilement took place. The three were a long time together. To play out the comedy, M. and Madame du Maine still kept apart, but saw and approached each other by degrees, until at last the former returned to Sceaux, and lived with his wife as before.



CHAPTER IX

Anecdote of Madame de Charlus—The Phillippiques—La Grange — Père Tellier — The Jesuits—Anecdote — Tellier's Banishment—Death of Madame de Maintenon—Her Life at Saint-Cyr.

TO go back, now, to the remaining events of the year 1719.

The Marquise de Charlus, sister of Mezières, and mother of the Marquis de Levi, who has since become a duke and a peer, died rich and old. She was the exact picture of an "old clothes" woman, and was thus subject to many insults from those who did not know her, which she by no means relished. To relieve a little the seriousness of these memoirs, I will here relate an amusing adventure of which she was heroine.

She was very avaricious, and a great gambler. She would have passed the night up to her knees in water in order to play. Heavy gambling at lansquenet was carried on at Paris in the evening, at Madame la Princesse de Conti's. Madame de Charlus supped there one Friday, between the games, much company being present. She was no better clad than at other times, and wore a head-dress, in vogue at that day, called *commode*, not fastened, but put on or taken off like a

wig or a night-cap. It was fashionable, then, to wear these head-dresses very high.

Madame de Charlus was near the Archbishop of Rheims, Le Tellier. She took a boiled egg, that she cracked, and in reaching for some salt, set her head-dress on fire, at a candle near, without perceiving it. The Archbishop, who saw her all in flames, seized the head-dress and flung it upon the ground. Madame de Charlus, in her surprise, and indignant at seeing herself thus uncovered, without knowing why, threw her egg in the Archbishop's face, and made him a fine mess.

Nothing but laughter was heard; and all the company were in convulsions of mirth at the grey, dirty, and hoary head of Madame de Charlus, and the Archbishop's omelette; above all, at the fury and abuse of Madame de Charlus, who thought she had been affronted, and who was a long time before she would understand the cause, irritated at finding herself thus treated before everybody. The head-dress was burnt, Madame la Princesse de Conti gave her another, but before it was on her head everybody had time to contemplate her charms, and she to grow in fury. Her husband died three months after her. M. de Levi expected to find treasures; there had been such; but they had taken wing and flown away.

About this time appeared some verses under the title of *Philippiques*, which were distributed with extraordinary promptitude and abundance. La Grange, formerly page of Madame la Princesse de Conti, was the author, and did not deny it. All that hell could vomit forth, true and false, was expressed in the most

beautiful verses, most poetic in style, and with all the art and talent imaginable. M. le Duc d'Orléans knew it, and wished to see the poem, but he could not succeed in getting it, for no one dared to show it to him.

He spoke of it several times to me, and at last demanded with such earnestness that I should bring it to him, that I could not refuse. I brought it to him accordingly, but read it to him I declared I never would. He took it, therefore, and read it in a low tone, standing in the window of his little cabinet, where we were. He judged it in reading much as it was, for he stopped from time to time to speak to me, and without appearing much moved. But all on a sudden I saw him change countenance, and turn towards me, tears in his eyes, and himself ready to drop.

"Ah," said he, "this is too much, this horrible poem beats me completely——"

He was at the part where the scoundrel shows M. le Duc d'Orléans having the design to poison the King, and quite ready to execute his crime. It is the part where the author redoubles his energy, his poetry, his invocations, his terrible and startling beauties, his invectives, his hideous pictures, his touching portraits of the youth and innocence of the King, and of the hopes he has, adjuring the nation to save so dear a victim from the barbarity of a murderer; in a word, all that is most delicate, most tender, stringent, and blackest, most pompous, and most moving, is there.

I wished to profit by the dejected silence into which the reading of this poem had thrown M. le Duc d'Orléans, to take from him the execrable paper, but I could not succeed; he broke out into just complaints

against such horrible wickedness, and into tenderness for the King; then finished his reading, that he interrupted more than once to speak to me. I never saw a man so penetrated, so deeply touched, so overwhelmed with injustice so enormous and sustained. As for me, I could not contain myself. To see him, the most prejudiced, if of good faith, would have been convinced he was innocent of the crime imputed to him, by the horror he displayed at it. I have said all, when I state that I recovered myself with difficulty, and that I had all the pains in the world to compose him a little.

This La Grange, who was of no personal value, yet a good poet—only that, and never anything else—had, by his poetry, insinuated himself into Sceaux, where he had become one of the great favourites of Madame du Maine. She and her husband knew his life, his habits, and his mercenary villainy. They knew, too, how to profit by it. He was arrested shortly afterwards, and sent to the Isles de Sainte Marguerite, which he obtained permission to leave before the end of the Regency. He had the audacity to show himself everywhere in Paris, and while he was appearing at the theatres and in all public places, people had the impudence to spread the report that M. le Duc d'Orléans had had him killed! M. le Duc d'Orléans and his enemies have been equally indefatigable; the latter in the blackest villainies, the Prince in the most unfruitful clemency, to call it by no more expressive name.

Before the Regent was called to the head of public affairs, I recommended him to banish Père Tellier

when he had the power to do so. He did not act upon my advice, or only partially; nevertheless, Tellier was disgraced, and after wandering hither and thither, a very firebrand wherever he went, he was confined by his superiors in La Flêche.

This tyrant of the Church, furious that he could no longer move, which had been his sole consolation during the end of his reign and his terrible domination, found himself at La Flêche, reduced to a position as insupportable as it was new to him.

The Jesuits, spies of each other, and jealous and envious of those who have the superior authority, are marvellously ungrateful towards those who, having occupied high posts, or served the company with much labour and success, become useless to it, by their age or their infirmities. They regard them with disdain, and instead of bestowing upon them the attention merited by their age, their services, and their merit, leave them in the dreariest solitude, and begrudge them even their food!

I have with my own eyes seen three examples of this in these Jesuits, men of much piety and honour, who had filled positions of confidence and of talent, and with whom I was very intimate. The first had been rector of their establishment at Paris, was distinguished by excellent works of piety, and was for several years assistant of the general at Rome, at the death of whom he returned to Paris; because the rule is, that the new general has new assistants. Upon his return to the Paris establishment he was put into a garret, at the very top of the house, amid solitude, contempt, and want.

The direction of the royal conscience had been the principal occupation of the two others, one of whom had even been proposed as confessor to Madame la Dauphine. One was long ill of a malady he died of. He was not properly nourished, and I sent him his dinner every day, for more than five months, because I had seen his pittance. I sent him even remedies, for he could not refrain from admitting to me that he suffered from the treatment he was subjected to.

The third, very old and very infirm, had not a better fate. At last, being no longer able to hold out, he asked to be allowed to pay a visit to my Versailles house (after having explained himself to me), under pretext of fresh air. He remained there several months, and died at the noviciate in Paris. Such is the fate of all the Jesuits, without excepting the most famous, putting aside a few who having shone at the Court and in the world by their sermons and their merit, and having made many friends—as Pères Bordaloue, La Rue, Gaillard—have been guaranteed from the general disgrace, because, often visited by the principal persons of the Court and the town, policy did not permit them to be treated like the rest, for fear of making so many considerable people notice what they would not have suffered without disturbance and scandal.

It was, then, in this abandonment and this contempt that Père Tellier remained at La Flêche, although he had from the Regent four thousand livres pension. He had ill-treated everybody. When he was confessor of the King, not one of his brethren approached him without trembling, although most of them were the

"big-wigs" of the company. Even the general of the company was forced to bend beneath the despotism he exercised upon all. There was not a Jesuit who did not disapprove the violence of his conduct, or who did not fear it would injure the society. All hated him, as a minister is hated who is coarse, harsh, inaccessible, egotistical, and who takes pleasure in showing his power and his disdain.

His exile, and the conduct that drew it upon him, were fresh motives for hatred against him, unveiling, as they did, a number of secret intrigues he had been concerned in, and which he had great interest in hiding. All these things together did not render agreeable to Tellier his forced retirement at La Flêche. He found there sharp superiors and equals, instead of the general terror his presence had formerly caused among the Jesuits. All now showed nothing but contempt for him, and took pleasure in making him sensible of it. This King of the Church, in part of the State, and in private of his society, became a common Jesuit like the rest, and under superiors; it may be imagined what a hell this was to a man so impetuous and so accustomed to a domination without reply, and without bounds, and abused in every fashion. Thus he did not endure it long. Nothing more was heard of him, and he died after having been only six months at La Flêche.

There was another death, which I may as well mention here, as it occurred about the same time.

On Saturday evening, the 15th of April, 1719, the celebrated and fatal Madame de Maintenon died at Saint-Cyr. What a stir this event would have made

in Europe, had it happened a few years earlier. It was scarcely mentioned in Paris!

I have already said so much respecting this woman, so unfortunately famous, that I will say but little more now. Her life at Saint-Cyr was divided between her spiritual duties, the letters she received from her religious correspondents, and the answers she gave to them. She took the communion twice a-week, ordinarily between seven and eight o'clock in the morning; not, as Dangeau says in his Mémoires, at midnight or every day. She was very rich, having four thousand livres pension per month from the Regent, besides other emoluments. She had, too, her estate at Maintenon, and some other property. With all this wealth, too, she had not a farthing of expense at Saint-Cyr. Everything was provided for herself and servants and their horses, even wood, coals, and candles. She had nothing to buy, except dress for herself and for her people. She kept a steward, a valet, people for the horses and the kitchen, a coach, seven or eight horses, one or two others for the saddle, besides having the young ladies of Saint-Cyr, chambermaids, and Mademoiselle d'Aumale to wait upon her.

The fall of the Duc du Maine at the Bed of Justice struck the first blow at her. It is not too much to presume that she was well informed of the measures and the designs of this darling, and that this hope had sustained her; but when she saw him arrested she succumbed; continuous fever seized her, and she died at eighty-three years of age, in the full possession of all her intellect.

Regret for her loss, which was not even universal

in Saint-Cyr, scarcely passed the walls of that community. Aubigny, Archbishop of Rouen, her pretended cousin, was the only man I ever heard of, who was fool enough to die of grief on account of it. But he was so afflicted by this loss, that he fell ill, and soon followed her.

CHAPTER X.

Mode of Life of the Duchesse de Berry—Her Illness—Her Degrading Amours — Her Danger Increases — The Sacraments Refused—The Curé is Supported by the Cardinal de Noailles—Curious Scene—The Duchess Refuses to Give Way—She Recovers, and is Delivered—Ambition of Rion—He Marries the Duchess—She Determines to go to Meudon—Rion Sent to the Army—Quarrels of Father and Daughter—Supper on the Terrace of Meudon—The Duchess Again Ill—Moves to La Muette—Great Danger—Receives the Sacrament—Garus and Chirac—Rival Doctors—Increased Illness—Death of the Duchess—Sentiments on the Occasion—Funeral Ceremonies—Madame de Saint-Simon Falls Ill—Her Recovery—We Move to Meudon—Character of the Duchesse de Berry.

MADAME la Duchesse De Berry was living as usual, amid the loftiest pride, and the vilest servitude; amid penitence the most austere at the Carmelite convent of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, and suppers the most profaned by vile company, filthiness, and impiety; amid the most shameless debauchery, and the most horrible fear of the devil and death; when lo! she fell ill at the Luxembourg.

I must disguise nothing more, especially as what I am relating belongs to history; and never in these memoirs have I introduced details upon gallantry ex-

cept such as were necessary to the proper comprehension of important or interesting matters to which they related. Madame la Duchesse de Berry would constrain herself in nothing; she was indignant that people would dare to speak of what she did not take the trouble to hide from them; and nevertheless she was grieved to death that her conduct was known.

She was in the family-way by Rion, but hid it as much as she could. Madame de Mouchy was their go-between, although her conduct was as clear as day. Rion and Mouchy, in fact, were in love with each other, and had innumerable facilities for indulging their passion. They laughed at the Princess, who was their dupe, and from whom they drew in council all they could. In one word, they were the masters of her and of her household, and so insolently, that M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, who knew them and hated them, feared them also and temporised with them. Madame de Saint-Simon, sheltered from all that, extremely loved and respected by all the household, and respected even by this couple who made themselves so much dreaded and courted, only saw Madame la Duchesse de Berry during the moments of presentation at the Luxembourg, whence she returned as soon as all was finished, entirely ignorant of what was passing, though she might have been perfectly instructed.

The illness of Madame la Duchesse de Berry came on, and this illness, ill prepared for by suppers washed down by wine and strong liquors, became stormy and dangerous. Madame de Saint-Simon could not avoid becoming assiduous in her attendance as soon as the peril appeared, but she never would yield to the in-

stances of M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, who, with all the household, wished her to sleep in the chamber allotted to her, and which she never put foot in, not even during the day. She found Madame la Duchesse de Berry shut up in a little chamber, which had private entrances—very useful just then, with no one near her but La Mouchy and Rion, and a few trusty waiting-women. All in attendance had free entrance to this room. M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans were not allowed to enter when they liked; of course it was the same with the lady of honour, the other ladies, the chief *femme de chambre,* and the doctors. All entered from time to time, but ringing for an instant. A bad headache or want of sleep caused them often to be asked to stay away, or, if they entered, to leave directly afterwards. They did not press their presence upon the sick woman, knowing only too well the nature of her malady; but contented themselves by asking after her through Madame de Mouchy, who opened the door to reply to them, keeping it scarcely ajar. This ridiculous proceeding passed before the crowd of the Luxembourg, of the Palais Royal, and of many other people who, for form's sake or for curiosity, came to inquire the news, and became common town-talk.

The danger increasing, Languet, a celebrated curé of Saint-Sulpice, who had always rendered himself assiduous, spoke of the sacraments to M. le Duc d'Orléans. The difficulty was how to enter and propose them to Madame la Duchesse de Berry. But another and greater difficulty soon appeared. It was this: the curé, like a man knowing his duty, refused to administer

the sacrament, or to suffer it to be administered, while Rion or Madame de Mouchy remained in the chamber, or even in the Luxembourg!

He declared this aloud before everybody, expressly in presence of M. le Duc d'Orléans, who was less shocked than embarrassed. He took the curé aside, and for a long time tried to make him give way. Seeing him inflexible, he proposed reference to the Cardinal de Noailles. The curé immediately agreed, and promised to defer to his orders, Noailles being his bishop, provided he was allowed to explain his reasons. The affair passed, and Madame la Duchesse de Berry made confession to a Cordelier, her confessor. M. le Duc d'Orléans flattered himself, no doubt, he would find the diocesan more flexible than the curé. If he hoped so he deceived himself.

The Cardinal de Noailles arrived; M. le Duc d'Orléans took him aside with the curé, and their conversation lasted more than half an hour. As the declaration of the curé had been public, the Cardinal Archbishop of Paris judged it fitting that his should be so also. As all three approached the door of the chamber, filled with company, the Cardinal de Noailles said aloud to the curé, that he had very worthily done his duty, that he expected nothing less from such a good, experienced, and enlightened man as he was; that he praised him for what he had demanded before administering the sacrament to Madame la Duchesse de Berry; that he exhorted him not to give in, or to suffer himself to be deceived upon so important a thing; and that if he wanted further authorisation he, as his bishop, diocesan, and superior, prohibited him from administering the sacra-

ments, or allowing them to be administered, to Madame la Duchesse de Berry while Rion and Madame de Mouchy were in the chamber, or even in the Luxembourg.

It may be imagined what a stir such inevitable scandal as this made in a room so full of company; what embarrassment it caused M. le Duc d'Orléans, and what a noise it immediately made everywhere. Nobody, even the chiefs of the constitution, the mass without, enemies of the Cardinal de Noailles, the most fashionable bishops, the most distinguished women, the libertines even—not one blamed the curé or his archbishop: some because they knew the rules of the Church, and did not dare to impugn them; others, the majority, from horror of the conduct of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, and hatred drawn upon her by her pride.

Now came the question between the Regent, the Cardinal, and the curé, which should announce this determination to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who in no way expected it, and who, having confessed, expected every moment to see the Holy Sacrament enter, and to take it. After a short colloquy urged on by the state of the patient, the Cardinal and the curé withdrew a little, while M. le Duc d'Orléans slightly opened the door and called Madame de Mouchy. Then, the door ajar, she within, he without, he told her what was in debate. La Mouchy, much astonished, still more annoyed, rode the high horse, talked of her merit, and of the affront that bigots wished to cast upon her and Madame la Duchesse de Berry, who would never suffer it or consent to it, and that she would die—in the state she was—if they had the impudence and the cruelty to tell it to her.

The conclusion was that La Mouchy undertook to announce to Madame la Duchesse de Berry the resolution that had been taken respecting the sacraments: what she added of her own may be imagined. A negative response did not fail to be quickly delivered to M. le Duc d'Orléans through the half-opened door. Coming through such a messenger, it was just the reply he might have expected. Immediately after, he repeated it to the Cardinal, and to the curé; the curé being supported by his archbishop, contented himself with shrugging his shoulders. But the Cardinal said to M. le Duc d'Orléans that Madame de Mouchy, one of the two who ought to be sent away, was not a fit person to bring Madame la Duchesse to reason; that it was his duty to carry this message to her, and to exhort her to do her duty as a Christian shortly about to appear before God; and the Archbishop pressed the Regent to go and say so to her. It will be believed, without difficulty, that his eloquence gained nothing. This Prince feared too much his daughter, and would have been but a feeble apostle with her.

Reiterated refusals determined the Cardinal to go and speak to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, accompanied by the curé, and as he wished to set about it at once, M. le Duc d'Orléans, who did not dare to hinder him, but who feared some sudden and dangerous revolution in his daughter at the sight and at the discourses of the two pastors, conjured him to wait until preparations could be made to receive him. He went, therefore, and held another colloquy through the door with Madame de Mouchy, the success of which was equal to the other. Madame la Duchesse de Berry flew into

fury, railed in unruly terms against these hypocritical humbugs, who took advantage of her state and their calling to dishonour her by an unheard-of scandal, not in the least sparing her father for his stupidity and feebleness in allowing it. To have heard her, you would have thought that the curé and the Cardinal ought to be kicked downstairs.

M. le Duc d'Orléans returned to the ecclesiastics, looking very small, and not knowing what to do between his daughter and them. However, he said to them that she was so weak and suffering that they must put off their visit, persuading them as well as he could. The attention and anxiety of the large company which filled the room were extreme: everything was known afterwards, bit by bit, during the day.

The Cardinal de Noailles remained more than two hours with M. le Duc d'Orléans, round whom people gathered at last. The Cardinal, seeing that he could not enter the chamber without a sort of violence, much opposed to persuasion, thought it indecent and useless to wait any longer. In going away, he reiterated his orders to the curé, and begged him to watch so as not to be deceived respecting the sacraments, lest attempts were made to administer them clandestinely. He afterwards approached Madame de Saint-Simon, took her aside, related to her what had passed, and deplored with her a scandal that he had not been able to avoid. M. le Duc d'Orléans hastened to announce to his daughter the departure of the Cardinal, at which he himself was much relieved. But on leaving the chamber he was astonished to find the curé glued against the door, and still more so to hear he had taken up his post there, and

meant to remain, happen what might, because he did not wish to be deceived respecting the sacraments. And, indeed, he remained there four days and four nights, except during short intervals for food and repose that he took at home, quite close to the Luxembourg, and during which his place was filled by two priests whom he left there. At last, the danger being passed, he raised the siege.

Madame la Duchesse de Berry, safely delivered of a daughter, had nothing to do but to re-establish herself; but she remained firm against the curé and the Cardinal de Noailles, neither of whom she ever pardoned. She became more and more bewitched by the two lovers, who laughed at her, and who were attached to her only for their fortune and their interest. She remained shut up without seeing M. and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, except for a few moments: no one, commencing with Madame de Saint-Simon, showed any eagerness to see her, for everybody knew what kept the door shut.

Madame la Duchesse de Berry, infinitely pained by the manner in which everybody, even the people, looked upon her malady, thought to gain a little lost ground by throwing open the gardens of the Luxembourg to the public, after having long since closed them. People were glad: they profited by the act; that was all. She made a vow that she would give herself up to religion, and dress in white—that is, devote herself to the service of the Virgin—for six months. This vow made people laugh a little.

Her illness had begun on the 26th of March, 1719, and Easter-day fell on the 9th of April. She was then quite well, but would not see a soul. A new cause of

annoyance had arisen to trouble her. Rion, who saw himself so successful as the lover of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, wished to improve his position by becoming her husband. He was encouraged in this desire by his uncle, M. de Lauzun, who had also advised him to treat her with the rigour, harshness—nay, brutality, which I have already described. The maxim of M. de Lauzun was, that the Bourbons must be ill-used and treated with a high hand in order to maintain empire over them. Madame de Mouchy was as strongly in favour of this marriage as Rion. She knew she was sure of her lover, and that when he became the husband of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, all the doors which shut intimacy would be thrown down. A secret marriage accordingly took place.

This marriage gave rise to violent quarrels, and much weeping. In order to deliver herself from these annoyances, and at the same time steer clear of Easter, the Duchess resolved to go away to Meudon on Easter Monday. It was in vain that the danger was represented to her, of the air, of the movement of the coach, and of the change of place at the end of a fortnight. Nothing could make her endure Paris any longer. She set out, therefore, followed by Rion and the majority of her ladies and her household.

M. le Duc d'Orléans informed me then of the fixed design of Madame la Duchesse de Berry to declare the secret marriage she had just made with Rion. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans was at Montmartre for a few days, and we were walking in the little garden of her apartments. The marriage did not surprise me much, knowing the strength of her passion, her fear of the

devil, and the scandal which had just happened. But I was astonished, to the last degree, at this furious desire to declare the marriage, in a person so superbly proud.

M. le Duc d'Orléans dilated upon his troubles, his anger, that of Madame (who wished to proceed to the most violent extremities), and the great resolve of Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. Fortunately the majority of the officers destined to serve against Spain (war with that country had just been declared) were leaving every day, and Rion had remained solely on account of the illness of Madame la Duchesse de Berry, M. le Duc d'Orléans thought the shortest plan would be to encourage hope by delay, in forcing Rion to depart, flattering himself that the declaration would be put off much more easily in his absence than in his presence. I strongly approved this idea, and on the morrow, Rion received at Meudon a curt and positive order to depart at once and join his regiment in the army of the Duc de Berwick. Madame la Duchesse de Berry was all the more outraged, because she knew the cause of this order, and consequently felt her inability to hinder its execution. Rion on his side did not dare to disobey it. He set out, therefore; and M. le Duc d'Orléans, who had not yet been to Meudon, remained several days without going there.

Father and daughter feared each other, and this departure had not put them on better terms. She had told him, and repeated it, that she was a rich widow, mistress of her own actions, independent of him; had flown into a fury, and terribly abused M. le Duc d'Orléans when he tried to remonstrate with her. He had received much rough handling from her at the Luxem-

bourg when she was better; it was the same at Meudon during the few visits he paid her there. She wished to declare her marriage; and all the art, intellect, gentleness, anger, menace, prayers, and interest of M. le Duc d'Orléans barely sufficed to make her consent to a brief delay.

If Madame had been listened to, the affair would have been finished before the journey to Meudon; for M. le Duc d'Orléans would have thrown Rion out of the windows of the Luxembourg!

The premature journey to Meudon, and quarrels so warm, were not calculated to re-establish a person just returned from the gates of death. The extreme desire she had to hide her state from the public, and to conceal the terms on which she was with her father (for the rarity of his visits to her began to be remarked), induced her to give a supper to him on the terrace of Meudon about eight o'clock one evening. In vain the danger was represented to her of the cool evening air so soon after an illness such as she had just suffered from, and which had left her health still tottering. It was specially on this account that she stuck more obstinately to her supper on the terrace, thinking that it would take away all suspicion she had been confined, and induce the belief that she was on the same terms as ever with M. le Duc d'Orléans, though the uncommon rarity of his visits to her had been remarked.

This supper in the open air did not succeed. The same night she was taken ill. She was attacked by accidents, caused by the state in which she still was, and by an irregular fever, that the opposition she met with respecting the declaration of her marriage did not con-

tribute to diminish. She grew disgusted with Meudon, like people ill in body and mind, who in their grief attribute everything to the air and the place. She was annoyed at the few visits she received from M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans,—her pride, however, suffering more than her tenderness.

In despite of all reason, nothing could hinder her from changing her abode. She was transferred from Meudon to the Muette, wrapped up in sheets, and in a large coach, on Sunday, the 14th of May, 1719. Arrived so near Paris, she hoped M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans would come and see her more frequently, if only for form's sake.

This journey was painful by the sufferings it caused her, added to those she already had, which no remedies could appease, except for short intervals, and which became very violent. Her illness augmented; but hopes and fears sustained her until the commencement of July. During all this time her desire to declare her marriage weakened, and M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, as well as Madame, who passed the summer at Saint-Cloud, came more frequently to see her. The month of July became more menacing because of the augmentation of pain and fever. These ills increased so much, in fact, that, by the 14th of July, fears for her life began to be felt.

The night of the 14th was so stormy, that M. le Duc d'Orléans was sent to at the Palais Royal, and awakened. At the same time Madame de Pons wrote to Madame de Saint-Simon, pressing her to come and establish herself at La Muette. Madame de Saint-Simon, although she made a point of scarcely ever sleeping

under the same roof as Madame la Duchesse de Berry (for reasons which need no further explanation than those already given), complied at once with this request, and took up her quarters from this time at La Muette.

Upon arriving, she found the danger great. Madame la Duchesse de Berry had been bled in the arm and in the foot on the 10th, and her confessor had been sent for. But the malady still went on increasing. As the pain which had so long afflicted her could not induce her to follow a regimen necessary for her condition, or to think of a future state, relations and doctors were at last obliged to speak a language to her, not used towards princesses, except at the most urgent extremity. This, at last, had its effect. She submitted to the medical treatment prescribed for her, and received the sacrament with open doors, speaking to those present upon her life and upon her state, but like a queen in both instances. After this sight was over, alone with her familiars, she applauded herself for the firmness she had displayed, asked them if she had not spoken well, and if she was not dying with greatness and courage.

A day or two after, she wished to receive Our Lord once more. She received, accordingly, and as it appeared, with much piety, quite differently from the first time.

At the extremity to which she had arrived, the doctors knew not what to do; everybody was tried. An elixir was spoken of, discovered by a certain Garus, which made much stir just then, and the secret of which the King has since bought. Garus was sent for and soon arrived. He found Madame la Duchesse de Berry so ill that he would answer for nothing. His remedy was

given, and succeeded beyond all hopes. Nothing remained but to continue it. Above all things, Garus had begged that nothing should, on any account, be given to Madame la Duchesse de Berry except by him, and this had been most expressly commanded by M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. Madame la Duchesse de Berry continued to be more and more relieved and so restored, that Chirac, her regular doctor, began to fear for his reputation, and taking the opportunity when Garus was asleep upon a sofa, presented, with impetuosity, a purgative to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, and made her swallow it without saying a word to anybody, the two nurses standing by, the only persons present, not daring to oppose him.

The audacity of this was as complete as its villainy, for M. le Duc and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans were close at hand in the salon. From this moment to that in which the patient fell into a state worse than that from which the elixir had drawn her, there was scarcely an interval. Garus was awaked and called. Seeing this disorder, he cried that a purgative had been given, and whatever it might be, it was poison in the state to which the princess was now reduced. He wished to depart, he was detained, he was taken to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. Then followed a great uproar, cries from Garus, impudence and unequalled hardihood of Chirac, in defending what he had done.

He could not deny it, for the two nurses had been questioned, and had told all. Madame la Duchesse de Berry drew near her end during this debate, and neither Chirac nor Garus could prevent it. She lasted, however, the rest of the day, and did not die until about mid-

night. Chirac, seeing the death-agony advance, traversed the chamber, made an insulting reverence at the foot of the bed, which was open, and wished her "a pleasant journey" (in equivalent terms), and thereupon went off to Paris. The marvel is that nothing came of this, and that he remained the doctor of M. le Duc d'Orléans as before!

While the end was yet approaching, Madame de Saint-Simon, seeing that there was no one to bear M. le Duc d'Orléans company, sent for me to stand by him in these sad moments. It appeared to me that my arrival pleased him, and that I was not altogether useless to him in relieving his grief. The rest of the day was passed in entering for a moment at a time into the sick-chamber. In the evening I was nearly always alone with him.

He wished that I should charge myself with all the funeral arrangements, and in case Madame la Duchesse de Berry, when opened, should be found to be enceinte, to see that the secret was kept. I proposed that the funeral should be of the simplest, without show or ceremonial. I explained my reasons, he thanked me, and left all the orders in my hands. Getting rid of these gloomy matters as quickly as possible, I walked with him from time to time in the reception rooms, and in the garden, keeping him from the chamber of the dying as much as possible.

The night was well advanced, and Madame la Duchesse de Berry grew worse and worse, and without consciousness since Chirac had poisoned her. M. le Duc d'Orléans returned into the chamber, approached the head of the bed—all the curtains being pulled back;

I allowed him to remain there but a few moments, and hurried him into the cabinet, which was deserted just then. The windows were open, he leaned upon the iron balustrade, and his tears increased so much that I feared lest they should suffocate him. When this attack had a little subsided, he began to talk of the misfortunes of this world, and of the short duration of its most agreeable pleasures. I urged the occasion to say to him everything God gave me the power to say, with all the gentleness, emotion, and tenderness, I could command. Not only he received well what I said to him, but he replied to it and prolonged the conversation.

After we had been there more than an hour, Madame de Saint-Simon gently warned me that it was time to try and lead M. le Duc d'Orléans away, especially as there was no exit from the cabinet, except through the sick-chamber. His coach, that Madame de Saint-Simon had sent for, was ready. It was without difficulty that I succeeded in gently moving away M. le Duc d'Orléans, plunged as he was in the most bitter grief. I made him traverse the chamber at once, and supplicated him to return to Paris. At last he consented. He wished me to remain and give orders, and begged, with much positiveness, Madame de Saint-Simon to be present when seals were put upon the effects, after which I led him to his coach, and he went away. I immediately repeated to Madame de Saint-Simon the orders he had given me respecting the opening of the body, in order that she might have them executed, and I hindered her from remaining in the chamber, where there was nothing now but horror to be seen.

At last, about midnight, on the 21st of July, 1719,

Madame la Duchesse de Berry died, ten days after Chirac had consummated his crime. M. le Duc d'Orléans was the only person touched. Some people grieved; but not one of them who had enough to live upon appeared ever to regret her loss. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans felt her deliverance, but paid every attention to decorum. Madame constrained herself but little. However affected M. le Duc d'Orléans might be, consolation soon came. The yoke to which he had submitted himself, and which he afterwards found heavy, was severed. Above all, he was free from all annoyance on the score of Rion's marriage, and its results, annoyance that would have been all the greater, inasmuch as at the opening of the poor princess she was found to be again enceinte; it was also found that her brain was deranged. These circumstances were for the time carefully hidden. It may be imagined what a state Rion fell into in learning at the army the death of Madame la Duchesse de Berry. All his romantic notions of ambition being overturned, he was more than once on the point of killing himself, and for a long time was always kept in sight by his friends. He sold out at the end of the campaign. As he had been gentle and polite to his friends, they did not desert him. But he ever afterwards remained in obscurity.

On account of this death the theatres were closed for eight days.

On Saturday, the 22nd of July, the heart of Madame la Duchesse de Berry was taken to the Val-de-Grace.

On Sunday, the 23rd of July, her body was carried in an eight-horse coach to Saint-Denis. There was very little display; only about forty torches were carried by pages and guards.

The funeral service was performed at Saint-Denis in the early part of September. There was no funeral oration.

Madame de Saint-Simon had been forced, as I have shown, to accept the post of lady of honour to Madame la Duchesse de Berry, and had never been able to quit it. She had been treated with all sorts of consideration, had been allowed every liberty, but this did not console her for the post she occupied; so that she felt all the pleasure, not to say the satisfaction, of a deliverance she did not expect, from a princess twenty-four years of age. But the extreme fatigue of the last days of the illness, and of those which followed death, caused her a malignant fever, which left her at death's portal during six weeks in a house at Passy. She was two months recovering herself.

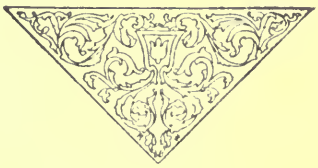
This accident, which almost turned my head, sequestered me from anything for two months, during which I never left the house, scarcely left the sick-chamber, attended to nothing, and saw only a few relatives or indispensable friends.

When my wife began to be re-established, I asked M. le Duc d'Orléans for a lodging at the new château at Meudon. He lent me the whole château, completely furnished. We passed there the rest of this summer, and several other summers afterwards. It is a charming place for rides or drives. We counted upon seeing only our friends there, but the proximity to Paris overwhelmed us with people, so that all the new château was sometimes completely filled, without reckoning the people of passage.

I have little need to say anything more of Madame la

Duchesse de Berry. These pages have already painted her. She was a strange mixture of pride and shamelessness. Drunkenness, filthy conversation, debauchery of the vilest kind, and impiety, were her diversions, varied, as has been seen, by occasional religious fits. Her indecency in everything, language, acts, behaviour, passed all bounds; and yet her pride was so sublime that she could not endure that people should dare to speak of her amid her depravity, so universal and so public; she had the hardihood to declare that nobody had the right to speak of persons of her rank, or blame their most notorious actions!

Yet she had by nature a superior intellect, and, when she wished, could be agreeable and amiable. Her face was commanding, though somewhat spoiled at last by fat. She had much eloquence, speaking with an ease and precision that charmed and overpowered. What might she not have become, with the talents she possessed! But her pride, her violent temper, her irreligion, and her falsehood, spoiled all, and made her what we have seen her.



CHAPTER XI.

The Mississippi Scheme—Law Offers Me Shares—Compensation for Blaye—The Rue Quincampoix—Excitement of the Public—Increased Popularity of the Scheme—Conniving of Law—Plot against His Life—Disagreement with Argenson—Their Quarrel—Avarice of the Prince de Conti—His Audacity — Anger of the Regent — Comparison with the Period of Louis XIV.—A Ballot Proposed—The Maréchal de Villeroy—The Young King is to Dance—Young Law Proposed—Excitement—The Young King's Disgust—Extravagant Presents of the Duc d'Orléans.

LAW had established his Mississippi Company, and now began to do marvels with it. A sort of language had been invented, to talk of this scheme, language which, however, I shall no more undertake to explain than the other finance operations. Everybody was mad upon Mississippi Stock. Immense fortunes were made, almost in a breath; Law, besieged in his house by eager applicants, saw people force open his door, enter by the windows from the garden, drop into his cabinet down the chimney! People talked only of millions!

Law, who, as I have said, came to my house every Tuesday, between eleven and twelve, often pressed me to receive some shares for nothing, offering to manage

them without any trouble to me, so that I must gain to the amount of several millions! So many people had already gained enormously by their own exertions that it was not doubtful Law could gain for me even more rapidly. But I never would lend myself to it. Law addressed himself to Madame de Saint-Simon, whom he found as inflexible. He would have much preferred to enrich me than many others; so as to attach me to him by interest, intimate as he saw me with the Regent. He spoke to M. le Duc d'Orléans, even, so as to vanquish me by his authority. The Regent attacked me more than once, but I always eluded him.

At last, one day when we were together by appointment, at Saint-Cloud, seated upon the balustrade of the orangery, which covers the descent into the wood of the goulottes, the Regent spoke again to me of the Mississippi, and pressed me to receive some shares from Law.

The more I resisted, the more he pressed me, and argued; at last he grew angry, and said that I was too conceited, thus to refuse what the King wished to give me (for everything was done in the King's name), while so many of my equals in rank and dignity were running after these shares. I replied that such conduct would be that of a fool, the conduct of impertinence, rather than of conceit; that it was not mine, and that since he pressed me so much I would tell him my reasons. They were, that since the fable of Midas, I had nowhere read, still less seen, that anybody had the faculty of converting into gold all he touched; that I did not believe this virtue was given to Law, but thought that all his knowledge was a learned trick, a

new and skilful juggle, which put the wealth of Peter into the pockets of Paul, and which enriched one at the expense of the other; that sooner or later the game would be played out, that an infinity of people would be ruined; finally, that I abhorred to gain at the expense of others, and would in no way mix myself up with the Mississippi scheme.

M. le Duc d'Orléans knew only too well how to reply to me, always returning to his idea that I was refusing the bounties of the King. I said that I was so removed from such madness, that I would make a proposition to him, of which assuredly I should never have spoken, but for his accusation.

I related to him the expense to which my father had been put in defending Blaye against the party of M. le Prince in years gone by. How he had paid the garrison, furnished provisions, cast cannon, stocked the place, during a blockade of eighteen months, and kept up, at his own expense, within the town, five hundred gentlemen, whom he had collected together. How he had been almost ruined by the undertaking, and had never received a sou, except in warrants to the amount of five hundred thousand livres, of which not one had ever been paid, and that he had been compelled to pay yearly the interest of the debts he had contracted, debts that still hung like a mill-stone upon me. My proposition was—that M. le Duc d'Orléans should indemnify me for this loss, I giving up the warrants, to be burnt before him.

This he at once agreed to. He spoke of it the very next day to Law: my warrants were burnt by degrees in the cabinet of M. le Duc d'Orléans, and it was by this means I paid for what I had done at La Ferté.

Meanwhile the Mississippi scheme went on more swimmingly than ever. It was established in the Rue Quincampoix, from which horses and coaches were banished. About the end of October of this year, 1717, its business so much increased, that the office was thronged all day long, and it was found necessary to place clocks and guards with drums at each end of the street, to inform people, at seven o'clock in the morning, of the opening of business, and of its close at night: fresh announcements were issued, too, prohibiting people from going there on Sundays and fête days.

Never had excitement or madness been heard of which approached this.

M. le Duc d'Orléans distributed a large number of the Company's shares to all the general officers and others employed in the war against Spain. A month after, the value of the specie was diminished; then the whole of the coin was re-cast.

Money was in such abundance—that is to say, the notes of Law, preferred then to the metallic currency—that four millions were paid to Bavaria, and three millions to Sweden, in settlement of old debts. Shortly after, M. le Duc d'Orléans gave 80,000 livres to Meuse, and 80,000 livres to Madame de Châteauthiers, dame d'atours of Madame. The Abbé Alari, too, obtained 2000 livres pension. Various other people had augmentation of income given to them at this time.

Day by day Law's bank and his Mississippi increased in favour. The confidence in them was complete. People could not change their lands and their houses into paper fast enough, and the result of this paper was,

that everything became dear beyond all previous experience. All heads were turned. Foreigners envied our good fortune, and left nothing undone to have a share in it. The English, even, so clear and so learned in banks, in companies, in commerce, allowed themselves to be caught, and bitterly repented it afterwards. Law, although cold and discreet, felt his modesty giving way. He grew tired of being a subaltern. He hankered after greatness in the midst of this splendour; the Abbé Dubois and M. le Duc d'Orléans desired it for him more than he; nevertheless, two formidable obstacles were in the way: Law was a foreigner and a heretic, and he could not be naturalised without a preliminary act of abjuration. To perform that, somebody must be found to convert him, somebody upon whom good reliance could be placed. The Abbé Dubois had such a person all ready in his pocket, so to speak. The Abbé Tencin was the name of this ecclesiastic, a fellow of debauched habits and shameless life, whom the devil has since pushed into the most astonishing good fortune; so true it is that he sometimes departs from his ordinary rules, in order to recompense his servitors, and by these striking examples dazzle others, and so secure them.

As may be imagined, Law did not feel very proud of the Abbé who had converted him: more especially as that same Abbé was just about this time publicly convicted of simony, of deliberate fraud, of right-down lying (proved by his own handwriting), and was condemned by the Parliament to pay a fine, which branded him with infamy, and which was the scandal of the whole town. Law, however, was converted, and this was a subject which supplied all conversation.

Soon after, he bought, for one million livres, the Hôtel Mazarin for his bank, which until then had been established in a house he hired of the Chief-President, who had not need of it, being very magnificently lodged in the Palace of the Parliament by virtue of his office. Law bought, at the same time, for 550,000 livres, the house of the Comte de Tessé.

Yet it was not all sunshine with this famous foreigner, for the sky above him was heavy with threatening clouds. In the midst of the flourishing success of his Mississippi, it was discovered that there was a plot to kill him. Thereupon sixteen soldiers of the regiment of the Guards were given to him as a protection to his house, and eight to his brother, who had come to Paris some little time before.

Law had other enemies besides those who were hidden. He could not get on well with Argenson, who, as comptroller of the finances, was continually thrown into connection with him. The disorder of the finances increased in consequence every day, as well as the quarrels between Law and Argenson, who each laid the blame upon the other. The Scotchman was the best supported, for his manners were pleasing, and his willingness to oblige infinite. He had, as it were, a finance tap in his hand, and he turned it on for every one who helped him. M. le Duc, Madame la Duchesse, Tessé, Madame de Verue, had drawn many millions through this tap, and drew still. The Abbé Dubois turned it on as he pleased. These were grand supports, besides that of M. le Duc d'Orléans, who could not part with his favourite.

Argenson, on the contrary, was not much liked. He

had been at the head of the police so long that he could not shake off the habits he had acquired in that position. He had been accustomed to give audiences upon all sorts of police matters at dead of night, or at the small hours of the morning, and he appeared to see no reason why he should not do the same now that he was Keeper of the Seals. He irritated people beyond all bearing, by making appointments with them at these unreasonable hours, and threw into despair all who worked under him, or who had business with him. The difficulty of the finances, and his struggles with Law, had thrown him into ill-humor, which extended through all his refusals. Things, in fact, had come to such a pass, that it was evident one or the other must give up an administration which their rivalry threw into confusion.

Argenson saw the storm coming, and feeling the insecurity of his position, wished to save himself. He had too much sense and too much knowledge of the world not to feel that if he obstinately clung to the finances he should not only lose them but the seals also. He yielded therefore to Law, who was at last declared comptroller-general of the finances, and who, elevated to this (for him) surprising point, continued to visit me as usual every Tuesday morning, always trying to persuade me into belief of his past miracles, and of those to come.

Argenson remained Keeper of the Seals, and skilfully turned to account the sacrifice he had made by obtaining through it the permission to surrender his appointment of Chancellor of the Order of Saint-Louis to his eldest son, and the title, effectively, to his younger son. His

place of Conseiller d'Etat, that he had retained, he also gave to his eldest son, and made the other lieutenant of police. The murmur was great upon seeing a foreigner comptroller-general, and all abandoned to a finance system which already had begun to be mistrusted. But Frenchmen grow accustomed to everything, and the majority were consoled by being no longer exposed to the sharp humour of Argenson, or his strange hours of business.

But Law's annoyances were not over when this change had been made. M. le Prince de Conti began to be troublesome. He was more grasping than any of his relatives, and that is not saying a little. He accosted Law now, pistol in hand, so to speak, and with a perfect "money or your life" manner. He had already amassed mountains of gold by the easy humour of M. le Duc d'Orléans; he had drawn, too, a good deal from Law, in private. Not content with this, he wished to draw more. M. le Duc d'Orléans grew tired, and was not over-pleased with him. The Parliament just then was at its tricks again; its plots began to peep out, and the Prince de Conti joined in its intrigues in order to try and play a part indecent, considering his birth; little fitting his age; shameful, after the monstrous favours unceasingly heaped upon him.

Repelled by the Regent, he turned, as I have said, towards Law, hoping for more success. His expectations were deceived; prayers, cringing meanness (for he stopped at nothing to get money) being of no effect, he tried main strength, and spared Law neither abuse nor menaces. In fact, not knowing what else to do to injure his bank, he sent three waggons there, and drove

them away full of money, which he made Law give him for paper he held. Law did not dare to refuse, and thus show the poverty of his metallic funds, but fearing to accustom so unsatiable a prince to such tyranny as this, he went, directly the waggons left, to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and complained of what had occurred. The Regent was much annoyed; he saw the dangerous results, and the pernicious example of so violent a proceeding, directed against an unsupported foreigner, whom rather lightly he had just made comptroller-general. He flew into a violent rage, sent for the Prince de Conti, and, contrary to his nature, reprimanded him so severely, that he was silenced and cried for mercy. But annoyed at having failed, and still more at the sharp scolding he had received, the Prince de Conti consoled himself, like a woman, by spreading all sorts of reports against Law, which caused him but little fear, and did him still less harm, but which did slight honour to M. le Prince de Conti, because the cause of these reports, and also the large sums he had drawn from the financier, were not unknown to the public; blame upon him was general, and all the more heavy, because Law had fallen out of public favour, which a mere trifle had changed into spite and indignation.

This is the trifle. The Maréchal de Villeroy, incapable of inspiring the King with any solid ideas, adoring even to worship the deceased King, full of wind, and lightness, and frivolity, and of sweet recollections of his early years, his grace at fêtes and ballets, his splendid gallantries, wished that the King, in imitation of the deceased monarch, should dance in a ballet. It was a little too early to think of this. This pleasure

seemed a trifle too much of pain to so young a King; his timidity should have been vanquished by degrees, in order to accustom him to society which he feared, before engaging him to show himself off in public, and dance upon a stage.

The deceased King,—educated in a brilliant Court, where rule and grandeur were kept up with much distinction, and where continual intercourse with ladies, the Queen-mother, and others of the Court, had early fashioned and emboldened him,—had relished and excelled in these sorts of fêtes and amusements, amid a crowd of young people of both sexes, who all rightfully bore the names of nobility, and amongst whom scarcely any of humble birth were mixed, for we cannot call thus some three or four of coarser stuff, who were admitted simply for the purpose of adding strength and beauty to the ballet, by the grace of their faces and the elegance of their movements, with a few dancing-masters to regulate and give the tone to the whole. Between this time and that I am now speaking of was an abyss. The education of those days instructed every one in grace, address, exercise, respect for bearing, graduated and delicate politeness, polished and decent gallantry. The difference, then, between the two periods is seen at a glance, without time lost in pointing it out.

Reflection was not the principal virtue of the Maréchal de Villeroy. He thought of no obstacle either on the part of the King or elsewhere, and declared that his Majesty would dance in a ballet. Everything was soon ready for the execution. It was not so with the action. It became necessary to search for young people who

could dance: soon, whether they danced ill or well, they were gladly received; at last the only question was, "Whom can we get?" consequently a sorry lot was obtained. Several, who ought never to have been admitted, were, and so easily, that from one to the other Law had the temerity to ask M. le Duc d'Orléans to allow his son, who danced very well, to join the ballet company! The Regent, always easy, still enamoured of Law, and, to speak truth, purposely contributing as much as possible to confusion of rank, immediately accorded the demand, and undertook to say so to the Maréchal de Villeroy.

The Maréchal, who hated and crossed Law with might and main, reddened with anger, and represented to the Regent what, in fact, deserved to be said: the Regent, in reply, named several young people, who, although of superior rank, were not so well fitted for the ballet as young Law; and although the answer to this was close at hand, the Maréchal could not find it, and exhausted himself in vain exclamations. He could not, therefore, resist the Regent; and having no support from M. le Duc, superintendent of the King's education and a great protector of Law and of confusion, he gave in, and the financier's son was named for the ballet.

It is impossible to express the public revolt excited by this bagatelle, at which every one was offended. Nothing else was spoken of for some days; tongues wagged freely, too; and a good deal of dirty water was thrown upon other dancers in the ballet.

At last the public was satisfied. The small-pox seized Law's son, and (on account of its keeping him

from the ballet) caused universal joy. The ballet was danced several times, its success answering in no way to the Maréchal de Villeroy. The King was so wearied, so fatigued, with learning, with rehearsing, and with dancing this ballet, that he took an aversion for these fêtes and for everything offering display, which has never quitted him since, and which does not fail to leave a void in the Court; so that this ballet ceased sooner than was intended, and the Maréchal de Villeroy never dared to propose another.

M. le Duc d'Orléans, either by his usual facility, or to smooth down the new elevation of Law to the post of comptroller-general, bestowed a number of pecuniary favours; he gave 600,000 livres to La Fare, captain of his guard; 100,000 livres to Castries, chevalier d'honneur to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans; 200,000 livres to the old Prince de Courtenay, who much needed them; 20,000 livres pension to the Prince de Talmont; 6000 livres to the Marquise de Bellefonds, who already had a similar sum; and moved by cries on the part of M. le Prince de Conti, 60,000 livres to the Comte de la Marche his son, scarcely three years old; he gave, also, smaller amounts to various others. Seeing so much depredation, and no recovery to hope for, I asked M. le Duc d'Orléans to attach 12,000 livres, by way of increase, to my government of Senlis, which was worth only 1000 livres, and of which my second son had the reversion. I obtained it at once.

CHAPTER XII.

System of Law in Danger—Prodigality of the Duc d'Orléans —Admissions of Law—Fall of His Notes—Violent Measures Taken to Support Them — Their Failure — Increased Extravagance of the Regent—Reduction of the Fervour—Proposed Colonies — Forced Emigration — Decree on the Indian Company—Scheming of Argenson—Attitude of the Parliament—Their Remonstrance—Dismissal of Law—His Coolness—Extraordinary Decree of the Council of State—Prohibition of Jewellery—New Schemes.

ABOUT the commencement of the new year, 1720, the system of Law approached its end. If he had been content with his bank—his bank within wise and proper limits—the money of the realm might have been doubled, and an extreme facility afforded to commerce and to private enterprise, because, the establishment always being prepared to meet its liabilities, the notes it issued would have been as good as ready money, and sometimes even preferable, on account of the facility of transport. It must be admitted, however, as I declared to M. le Duc d'Orléans in his cabinet, and as I openly said in the Council of the Regency when the bank passed there, that good as this establishment might be in itself, it could only be so in a republic, or in a monarchy, like that of England, where

the finances are absolutely governed by those who furnish them, and who simply furnish as much or as little as they please; but in a trivial, changing, and more than absolute state like France solidity necessarily is wanting, consequently confidence (at least of a discreet and proper kind): since a king, and under his name, a mistress, a minister, favourites; still more, extreme necessities, such as the deceased King experienced in the years 1707-8-9 and 10,—a hundred things, in fact, could overthrow the bank, the allurements of which were, at once, too great and too easy. But to add to the reality of this bank, the chimera of the Mississippi, with its shares, its special jargon, its science (a continual juggle for drawing money from one person to give it to another), was to almost guarantee that these shares should at last end in smoke (since we had neither mines, nor quarries of the philosopher's stone), and that the few would be enriched at the expense of the many, as in fact happened.

What hastened the fall of the bank, and of the system, was the inconceivable prodigality of M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, without bounds, and worse still, if it can be, without choice, could not resist the importunities even of those whom he knew, beyond all doubt, to have been the most opposed to him, and who were completely despicable, but gave with open hands; and more frequently allowed money to be drawn from him by people who laughed at him, and who were grateful only to their effrontery. People with difficulty believe what they have seen; and posterity will consider as a fable what we ourselves look upon as a dream. At last, so much was given to a greedy and

prodigal nation, always covetous and in want on account of its luxury, its disorder, and its confusion of ranks, that paper became scarce, and the mills could not furnish enough.

It may be imagined by this, what abuse had been made of a bank, established as a resource always ready, but which could not exist as such without being always delicately adjusted; and above all, kept in a state to meet the obligations it had contracted. I obtained information on this point from Law, when he came to me on Tuesday mornings; for a long time he played with me before admitting his embarrassments, and complained modestly and timidly, that the Regent was ruining everything by his extravagance. I knew from outsiders more than he thought, and it was this that induced me to press him upon his balance-sheet. In admitting to me, at last, although faintly, what he could no longer hide, he assured me he should not be wanting in resources provided M. le Duc d'Orléans left him free. That did not persuade me. Soon after, the notes began to lose favour; then to fall into discredit, and the discredit to become public. Then came the necessity to sustain them by force, since they could no longer be sustained by industry; and the moment force showed itself every one felt that all was over. Coercive authority was resorted to; the use of gold, silver, and jewels was suppressed (I speak of coined money); it was pretended that since the time of Abraham,—Abraham, who paid ready money for the sepulchre of Sarah,—all the civilised nations in the world had been in the greatest error and under the grossest delusion, respecting money and the metals

it is made of; that paper alone was useful and necessary; that we could not do greater harm to our neighbours—jealous of our greatness and of our advantages—than to send to them all our money and all our jewels; and this idea was in no way concealed, for the Indian Company was allowed to visit every house, even Royal houses, confiscate all the louis d'or, and the coins it could find there; and to leave only pieces of twenty sous and under (to the amount of not more than 200 francs), for the odd money of bills, and in order to purchase necessary provisions of a minor kind, with prohibitions, strengthened by heavy punishment, against keeping more; so that everybody was obliged to take all the ready money he possessed to the bank, for fear of its being discovered by a valet. But nobody, as may be imagined, was persuaded of the justice of the power accorded to the Company, and accordingly authority was more and more exerted; all private houses were searched, informations were laid against people in order that no money might be kept back, or if it were, that the guilty parties might be severely punished.

Never before had sovereign power been so violently exercised, never had it attacked in such a manner the temporal interests of the community. Therefore was it by a prodigy, rather than by any effort or act of the government, that these terribly new ordonnances failed to produce the saddest and most complete revolutions; but there was not even talk of them; and although there were so many millions of people, either absolutely ruined or dying of hunger, and of the direst want, without means to procure their daily subsist-

ence, nothing more than complaints and groans was heard.

This violence was, however, too excessive, and in every respect too indefensible to last long; new paper and new juggling tricks were of necessity resorted to; the latter were known to be such—people felt them to be such—but they submitted to them rather than not have twenty crowns in safety in their houses; and a greater violence made people suffer the smaller. Hence so many projects, so many different faces in finance, and all tending to establish one issue of paper upon another; that is to say, always causing loss to the holders of the different paper (everybody being obliged to hold it), and the universal multitude. This is what occupied all the rest of the government, and of the life of M. le Duc d'Orléans; which drove Law out of the realm; which increased six-fold the price of all merchandise, all food even the commonest; which ruinously augmented every kind of wages, and ruined public and private commerce; which gave, at the expense of the public, sudden riches to a few noblemen who dissipated it, and were all the poorer in a short time; which enabled many financiers' clerks, and the lowest dregs of the people, profiting by the general confusion, to take advantage of the Mississippi, and make enormous fortunes; which occupied the government several years after the death of M. le Duc d'Orléans; and which, to conclude, France never will recover from, although it may be true that the value of land is considerably augmented. As a last affliction, the all-powerful, especially the princes and princesses of the blood, who had been mixed up in the

Mississippi, and who had used all their authority to escape from it without loss, re-established it upon what they called the Great Western Company, which with the same juggles and exclusive trade with the Indies, is completing the annihilation of the trade of the realm, sacrificed to the enormous interest of a small number of private individuals, whose hatred and vengeance the government has not dared to draw upon itself by attacking their delicate privileges.

Several violent executions, and confiscations of considerable sums found in the houses searched, took place. A certain Adine, employed at the bank, had 10,000 crowns confiscated, was fined 10,000 francs, and lost his appointment. Many people hid their money with so much secrecy, that, dying without being able to say where they had put it, these little treasures remained buried and lost to the heirs.

In the midst of the embarrassments of the finances, and in spite of them, M. le Duc d'Orléans continued his prodigal gifts. He attached pensions of 6000 livres and 4000 livres to the grades of lieutenant-general and camp-marshal. He gave a pension of 20,000 livres to old Montauban; one of 6000 livres to M. de Montauban (younger brother of the Prince de Guéméné); and one of 6000 livres to the Duchesse de Brissac. To several other people he gave pensions of 4000 livres; to eight or ten others, 3000 or 2000 livres. I obtained one of 8000 livres for Madame Maréchal de Lorges; and one of 6000 livres was given to the Maréchal de Chamilly, whose affairs were much deranged by the Mississippi. M. de Soubise and the Marquis Noailles had each upwards of 200,000 livres. Even Saint-

Geniès, just out of the Bastille, and banished to Beauvais, had a pension of 1000. Everybody in truth wanted an augmentation of income, on account of the extreme high price to which the commonest, almost necessary things had risen, and even all other things; which, although at last diminished by degrees, remain to this day much dearer than they were before the Mississippi.

The pensions being given away, M. le Duc d'Orléans began to think how he could reduce the public expenditure. Persuaded by those in whose financial knowledge he had most confidence, he resolved to reduce to two per cent. the interest upon all the funds. This much relieved those who paid, but terribly cut down the income of those who received, that is to say, the creditors of the state, who had lent their money at five per cent., according to the loan—and, public faith and usage, and who had hitherto peacefully enjoyed that interest. M. le Duc d'Orléans assembled at the Palais Royal several financiers of different rank, and resolved with them to pass this edict. It made much stir among the Parliament men, who refused to register it. But M. le Duc d'Orléans would not change his determination, and maintained his decree in spite of them.

By dint of turning and turning around the Mississippi, not to say of juggling with it, the desire came to establish, according to the example of the English, colonies in the vast countries beyond the seas. In order to people these colonies, persons without means of livelihood, sturdy beggars, female and male, and a quantity of public creatures were carried off. If this

had been executed with discretion and discernment, with the necessary measures and precautions, it would have ensured the object proposed, and relieved Paris and the provinces of a heavy, useless, and often dangerous burthen; but in Paris and elsewhere so much violence, and even more roguery, were mixed up with it, that great murmuring was excited. Not the slightest care had been taken to provide for the subsistence of so many unfortunate people, either while in the place they were to embark from, or while on the road to reach it; by night they were shut up, with nothing to eat, in barns, or in the dry ditches of the towns they stopped in, all means of egress being forbidden them. They uttered cries which excited pity and indignation; but the alms collected for them not being sufficient, still less the little their conductors gave them, they everywhere died in frightful numbers.

This inhumanity, joined to the barbarity of the conductors, to violence of a kind unknown until this, and to the rascality of carrying off people who were not of the prescribed quality, but whom others thus got rid of by whispering a word in the ear of the conductors and greasing their palms; all these things, I say, caused so much stir, so much excitement, that the system, it was found, could not be kept up. Some troops had been embarked, and during the voyage were not treated much better than the others. The persons already collected were set at liberty, allowed to do what they pleased, and no more were seized. Law, regarded as the author of these seizures, became much detested, and M. le Duc d'Orléans repented having ever fallen in with the scheme.

The 22nd of May of this year, 1720, became celebrated by the publication of a decree of the Council of State, concerning the shares of the Company of the Indies (the same as that known under the name of Mississippi) and the notes of Law's bank. This decree diminished by degrees, and from month to month, the value of the shares and the notes, so that, by the end of the year, that value would have been reduced one-half.

This, in the language of finance and of bankruptcy, was to turn tail with a vengeance; and its effect, while remedying nothing, was to make people believe that things were in a worse state than was actually the case. Argenson, who, as we have seen, had been turned out of the finances to make room for Law, was generally accused of suggesting this decree out of malice, already foreseeing all the evils that must arise from it. The uproar was general and frightful. There was not a rich person who did not believe himself lost without resource; not a poor one who did not see himself reduced to beggary. The Parliament, so opposed to the new money system, did not let slip this fine opportunity. It rendered itself the protector of the public by refusing to register the decree, and by promptly uttering the strongest remonstrance against it. The public even believed that to the Parliament was due the sudden revocation of the edict, which, however, was simply caused by the universal complaining, and the tardy discovery of the fault committed in passing it. The little confidence in Law remaining was now radically extinguished; not an atom of it could ever be set afloat again. Seditious writings and analytical

and reasonable pamphlets rained on all sides, and the consternation was general.

The Parliament assembled on Monday, the 27th of May, in the morning, and named certain of its members to go to M. le Duc d'Orléans, with remonstrances against the decree. About noon of the same day, M. le Duc d'Orléans sent La Vrillière to say to the Parliament that he revoked that decree, and that the notes would remain as before. La Vrillière, finding that the Parliament had adjourned, went to the Chief-President, to say with what he was charged. After dinner the Parliamentary deputies came to the Palais Royal, where they were well received; M. le Duc d'Orléans confirmed what they had already heard from La Vrillière, and said to them that he would re-establish the funds of the Hôtel de Ville at two-and-a-half per cent. The deputies expected that in justice and in goodness he ought to raise them to at least three per cent. M. le Duc d'Orléans answered, that he should like not only to raise them to three, but to four, nay five per cent.; but that the state of affairs would not permit him to go beyond two-and-a-half. On the next day was published the counter-decree, which placed the shares and actions as they were before the 22nd of May. The decree of that date was therefore revoked in six days, after having caused such a strange effect.

On Wednesday, the 29th, a pretty little comedy was played. Le Blanc, Secretary of State, went to Law, told him that M. le Duc d'Orléans discharged him from his office as comptroller-general of the finances, thanked him for the attention he had given to it, and announced that as many people in Paris did not like

him, a meritorious officer should keep guard in his house to prevent any accident that might happen to him. At the same time, Benzualde, major of the regiment of Swiss guards, arrived with sixteen of his men to remain night and day in Law's house.

The Scotchman did not in the least expect this dismissal or this guard, but he appeared very tranquil respecting both, and maintained his usual coolness. The next day he was taken by the Duc de la Force to the Palais Royal. Then comedy number two was played. M. le Duc d'Orléans refused to see the financier, who went away without an interview. On the day after, however, Law was admitted by the back stairs, closeted with the Regent, and was treated by him as well as ever. The comedies were over.

On Sunday, the 2nd of June, Benzualde and his Swiss withdrew from Law's house. Stock-jobbing was banished at the same time from the Rue Quincampoix, and established in the Place Vendôme. In this latter place there was more room for it. The passers-by were not incommoded. Yet some people did not find it as convenient as the other. At this time the King gave up to the bank one hundred million of shares he had in it.

On the 5th July, a decree of the Council was issued, prohibiting people from possessing jewels, from keeping them locked up, or from selling them to foreigners. It may be imagined what a commotion ensued. This decree was grafted upon a number of others, the object of all, too visibly, being to seize upon all coin, in favour of the discredited paper, in which nobody could any longer have the slightest confidence. In vain M. le

Duc d'Orléans, M. le Duc, and his mother, tried to persuade others, by getting rid of their immense stores of jewels, that is to say, by sending them abroad on a journey—nothing more: not a person was duped by this example; not a person omitted to conceal his jewels very carefully: a thing much more easy to accomplish than the concealment of gold or silver coin, on account of the smaller value of precious stones. This jewellery eclipse was not of long duration.

CHAPTER XIII.

The New Edict—The Commercial Company—New Edict—Rush on the Bank—People Stifled in the Crowd—Excitement against Law—Money of the Bank—Exile of the Parliament to Pontoise—New Operation—The Place Vendôme—The Maréchal de Villeroy—Marseilles—Flight of Law—Character of Him and His Wife—Observations on His Schemes—Decrees of the Finance.

IMMEDIATELY after the issue of this decree an edict was drawn up for the establishment of an Indian commercial company, which was to undertake to reimburse in a year six hundred millions of bank notes, by paying fifty thousand dollars per month. Such was the last resource of Law and his system. For the juggling tricks of the Mississippi, it was found necessary to substitute something real; especially since the edict of the 22nd of May, so celebrated and so disastrous for the paper. Chimeras were replaced by realities—by a true India Company; and it was this name and this thing which succeeded, which took the place of the undertaking previously known as the Mississippi. It was in vain that the tobacco monopoly and a number of other immense monopolies were given to the new company; they could not enable it to meet the proper claims spread among the public,

no matter what trouble might be taken to diminish them at all hazard and at all loss.

It was now necessary to seek other expedients. None could be found except that of rendering this company a commercial one; this was, under a gentler name, a name vague and unpretending, to hand over to it the entire and exclusive commerce of the country. It may be imagined how such a resolution was received by the public, exasperated by the severe decree, prohibiting people, under heavy penalties, from having more than five hundred livres, in coin, in their possession, subjecting them to visits of inspection, and leaving them nothing but bank notes to pay for the commonest necessaries of daily life. Two things resulted; first, fury, which day by day was so embittered by the difficulty of obtaining money for daily subsistence, that it was a marvel all Paris did not revolt at once, and that the émeute was appeased: second, the Parliament, taking its stand upon this public emotion, held firm to the end in refusing to register the edict instituting the new company.

On the 15th of July, the Chancellor showed in his own house the draught of the edict to deputies from the Parliament, who remained with him until nine o'clock at night, without being persuaded. On the morrow, the 16th, the edict was brought forward in the Regency Council. M. le Duc d'Orléans, sustained by M. le Duc, spoke well upon it, because he could not speak ill, however bad his theme. Nobody said a word, and all bowed their necks. It was resolved, in this manner, to send the edict to the Parliament on the morrow, the 17th of July.

That same 17th of July, there was such a crowd in the morning, at the bank and in the neighbouring streets, for the purpose of obtaining enough money to go to market with, that ten or twelve people were stifled. Three of the bodies were tumultuously carried to the Palais Royal, which the people, with loud cries, wished to enter. A detachment of the King's guards at the Tuileries was promptly sent there. La Vrillière and Le Blanc separately harangued the people. The lieutenant of police came; brigades of the watch were sent for. The dead bodies were afterwards carried away, and by gentleness and cajoleries the people were at length dispersed. The detachment of the King's guards returned to the Tuileries. By about ten o'clock in the morning, all being over, Law took it into his head to go to the Palais Royal. He received many imprecations as he passed through the streets. M. le Duc d'Orléans thought it would be well not to let him leave the Palais Royal, and gave him a lodging there. He sent back Law's carriage, however, the windows of which were smashed on the way by the stones thrown at them. Law's house, too, was attacked, amid much breaking of windows. All this was known so late in our quarter of the Jacobins of the Saint-Dominique, that when I arrived at the Palais Royal there was not a vestige visible of any disturbance. M. le Duc d'Orléans, in the midst of a very small company, was very tranquil, and showed that you would not please him unless you were so also. I did not stop long, having nothing to do or say.

This same morning the edict was carried to the Parliament, which refused to register it, and sent a dep-

utation to M. le Duc d'Orléans with its reasons for this, at which the Regent was much vexed. The next morning an ordonnance of the King was pasted all over the town, prohibiting the people, under heavy penalties, to assemble, and announcing that in consequence of the disturbances which had taken place the previous day at the bank, that establishment would remain closed until further notice, and no more money would be paid by it. Luck supplied the place of prudence; for people knew not how they were to live in the meanwhile, yet no fresh disturbance occurred—a fact which shows the goodness and obedience of the people, subjected to so many and to such strange trials. Troops, however, were collected at Charenton, who were at work upon the canal of Montargis: some regiments of cavalry and of dragoons were stationed at Saint-Denis, and the King's regiment was posted upon the heights of Chaillot. Money was sent to Gonesse to induce the bakers to come as usual, and for fear they should refuse bank notes, like the Paris workmen and shopkeepers, nearly all of whom would no longer receive any paper, the regiment of the guards had orders to hold itself ready, and the musketeers to keep within their quarters, their horses saddled and bridled.

As for the Parliament, M. le Duc d'Orléans determined to punish its disobedience by sending it to Blois. This resolution was carried in full council. The Regent hoped that the Parliamentary men, accustomed to the comfort of their Paris homes, and to the society there of their wives, children, and friends, would soon grow tired of being separated from them, and of the extra expense they would be put to, and would give in.

I agreed to the project, although I saw, alas! that by this exile the Parliament would be punished, but would be neither conciliated nor tamed into submission. To make matters worse, Blois was given up, and Pontoise was substituted for it! This latter town being close to Paris, the chastisement became ridiculous, showed the vacillating weakness of the Regent, and encouraged the Parliament to laugh at him. One thing was, however, well done. The resolution taken to banish the Parliament was kept so secret that that assembly had not the slightest knowledge of it.

On Sunday, the 21st of July, squadrons of the guards, with officers at their head, took possession, at four o'clock in the morning, of all the doors of the Palais de Justice. The musketeers seized at the same time upon the doors of the Grand Chamber, whilst others invaded the house of the Chief-President, who was in much fear during the first hour. Other musketeers went in parties of four to all the officers of the Parliament, and served them with the King's order, commanding them to repair to Pontoise within twice twenty-four hours. All passed off very politely on both sides, so that there was not the slightest complaint: several members obeyed the same day and went to Pontoise.

Rather late in the evening M. le Duc d'Orléans sent to the Attorney-General 100,000 livres in coin, and as much in bank notes of 100 livres, and of 10 livres to be given to those who should need them for the journey, but not as gifts. The Chief-President was more brazen and more fortunate; he made so many promises, showed so much meanness, employed so much roguery,

that abusing by these means the feebleness and easiness of the Regent, whom he laughed at, he obtained more than 100,000 écus for his expenses. The poor prince gave him the money, under the rose, in two or three different payments, and permitted the Duc de Bouillon to lend him his house at Pontoise, completely furnished, and the garden of which, on the banks of the river, is admirable and immense, a masterpiece of its kind, and had been the delight of Cardinal Bouillon, being perhaps the only thing in France he regretted. With such fine assistance the Chief-President—on bad terms with his companions, who had openly despised him for some time—perfectly made it up with them. He kept at Pontoise open table for the Parliament; all were every day at liberty to use it if they liked, so that there were always several tables, all equally, delicately, and splendidly served. He sent, too, to those who asked for them, liquors, etc., as they could desire. Cooling drinks and fruits of all kinds were abundantly served every afternoon, and there were a number of little one- and two-horse vehicles always ready for the ladies and old men who liked a drive, besides play-tables in the apartments until supper time. The result of all this magnificence was, as I have said, that the Chief-President completely reinstated himself in the good graces of his companions; but it was at the expense of the Regent, who was laughed at for his pains. A large number of the members of the Parliament did not go to Pontoise at all, but took advantage of the occasion to recreate themselves in the country. Only a few of the younger members mounted guard in the assembly, where nothing but the most trivial and

make-believe business was conducted. Everything important was deliberately neglected. Woe! to those, therefore, who had any trial on hand. The Parliament, in a word, did nothing but divert itself, leave all business untouched, and laugh at the Regent and the government. Banishment to Pontoise was a fine punishment!

This banishment of the Parliament to Pontoise was followed by various financial operations and by several changes in the administrations. Des Forts had the general control of the finances and all authority, but without the name. The disordered state of the exchequer did not hinder M. le Duc d'Orléans from indulging in his strange liberalities to people without merit and without need, and not one of whom he could possibly care a straw for. He gave to Madame la Grande Duchesse an augmentation of her pension of 50,000 livres; one of 8,000 livres to Trudaine; one of 9,000 livres to Chateauneuf; one of 8,000 livres to Bontems, chief *valet de chambre* of the King; one of 6,000 livres to the Maréchal de Montesquieu; one of 3,000 livres to Faucault; and one of 9,000 livres to the widow of the Duc d'Albemarle, secretly remarried to the son of Mahoni!

All this time the public stock-jobbing still continued on the Place Vendôme. The Mississippi had tempted everybody. It was who should fill his pockets first with millions, through M. le Duc d'Orléans and Law. The crowd was very great. One day the Maréchal de Villars traversed the Place Vendôme in a fine coach, loaded with pages and lackeys, to make way for which the mob of stock-jobbers had some difficulty. The

Maréchal upon this harangued the people in his braggart manner from the carriage window, crying out against the iniquity of stock-jobbing, and the shame it cast upon all. Until this point he had been allowed to say on, but when he thought fit to add that his own hands were clean, and that he had never dabbled in shares, a voice uttered a cutting sarcasm, and all the crowd took up the word, at which the Maréchal, ashamed and confounded, despite his ordinary authority, buried himself in his carriage and finished his journey across the Place Vendôme at a gentle trot in the midst of a hue and cry, which followed him even beyond, and which diverted Paris at his expense for several days, nobody pitying him.

At last it was found that this stock-jobbing too much embarrassed the Place Vendôme and the public way; it was transferred, therefore, to the vast garden of the Hôtel de Soissons. This was, in fact, its proper place. Law, who had remained at the Palais Royal some time, had returned to his own house, where he received many visits. The King several times went to see the troops that had been stationed near Paris; after this they were sent away again. Those which had formed a little camp at Charenton, returned to Montargis to work at the canal making there.

Law, for commercial reasons, had some time ago caused Marseilles to be made a free port. The consequence of this was that an abundance of vessels came there, especially vessels from the Levant, and from want of precautions the plague came also, lasted a long while, desolated the town, province, and the neighbouring provinces. The care and precautions

afterwards taken restrained it as much as possible, but did not hinder it from lasting a long time, or from creating frightful disorders. These details are so well known that they can be dispensed with here.

I have a few more words to say of Law and his Mississippi. The bubble finally burst at the end of the year (1720). Law, who had no more resources, being obliged secretly to depart from the realm, was sacrificed to the public. His flight was known only through the eldest son of Argenson, intendant at Maubeuge, who had the stupidity to arrest him. The courier he despatched with the news was immediately sent back, with a strong reprimand for not having deferred to the passport with which Law had been furnished by the Regent. The financier was with his son, and they both went to Brussels where the Marquis de Prié, Governor of the Imperial Low Countries, received them very well, and entertained them. Law did not stop long, gained Liège and Germany, where he offered his talents to several princes, who all thanked him; nothing more. After having thus roamed, he passed through the Tyrol, visited several Italian courts, not one of which would have him, and at last retired to Venice. This republic, however, did not employ him. His wife and daughter followed him some time after. I don't know what became of them or of the son.

Law was a Scotchman; of very doubtful birth; tall and well made; of agreeable face and aspect; gallant, and on very good terms with the ladies of all the countries he had travelled in. His wife was not his wife; she was of a good English family and well connected; had followed Law for love; had had a son and a daugh-

ter by him, passed for his wife, and bore his name without being married to him. This was suspected towards the end; after his departure it became certain. She had one eye and the top of one cheek covered by an ugly stain as of wine; otherwise she was well made, proud, impertinent in her conversation and in her manners, receiving compliments, giving next to none, paying but few visits, these rare and selected, and exercising authority in her household. I know not whether her credit over her husband was great; but he appeared full of regard, of care, and of respect for her; at the time of their departure they were each about fifty and fifty-five years old. Law had made many acquisitions of all kinds and still more debts, so that this tangle is not yet unravelled by the committee of the council appointed to arrange his affairs with his creditors. I have said elsewhere, and I repeat it here, that there was neither avarice nor roguery in his composition. He was a gentle, good, respectable man, whom excess of credit and fortune had not spoiled, and whose deportment, equipages, table, and furniture could not scandalise any one. He suffered with singular patience and constancy all the vexations excited by his operations, until towards the last, when, finding himself short of means and wishing to meet his difficulty, he became quick and bad-tempered, and his replies were often ill-measured. He was a man of system, of calculation, of comparison, well and profoundly instructed in these things, and, without ever cheating, had everywhere gained at play by dint of understanding—which seems to me incredible—the combinations of cards.

His bank, as I have elsewhere said, was an excellent

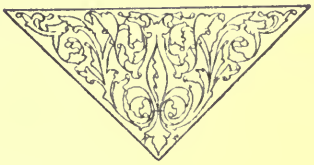
thing for a republic, or for a country like England, where finance is as in a republic. His Mississippi he was the dupe of, and believed with good faith he should make great and rich establishments in America. He reasoned like an Englishman, and did not know how opposed to commerce and to such establishments are the frivolity of the (French) nation, its inexperience, its avidity to enrich itself at once, the inconvenience of a despotic government, which meddles with everything which has little or no consistency, and in which what one minister does is always destroyed by his successor.

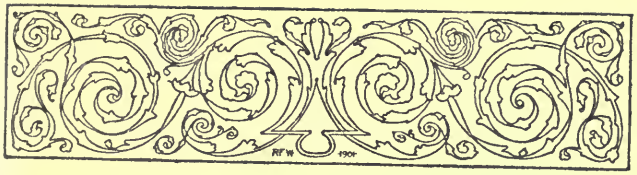
Law's proscription of specie, then of jewels, so as to have only paper in France, is a system I have never comprehended, nor has anybody, I fancy, during all the ages which have elapsed since that in which Abraham, after losing Sarah, bought, for ready-money, a supulchre for her and for her children. But Law was a man of system, and of system so deep, that nobody ever could get to the bottom of it, though he spoke easily, well and clearly, but with a good deal of English in his French.

He remained several years at Venice, upon very scanty means, and died there a Catholic, having lived decently, but very humbly, wisely, and modest, and received with piety the last sacraments of the Church.

Thus terminates all I have to say of Law. But a painful truth remains. I have to speak of the woful disorder in the finances which his system led to,—disorder which was not fully known until after his departure from France. Then people saw, at last, where all the golden schemes that had flooded upon popular

credulity had borne us;—not to the smiling and fertile shores of Prosperity and Confidence, as may be imagined; but to the bleak rocks and dangerous sands of Ruin and Mistrust, where dull clouds obscure the sky, and where there is no protection against the storm.





CHAPTER XIV.

Council on the Finances—Departure of Law—A Strange Dialogue—M. le Duc and the Regent—Crimes Imputed to Law During His Absence — Schemes Proposed — End of the Council.

NOT long after the flight of Law, that is to say, on Sunday, the 24th of January, of the new year, 1721, a council was held at the Tuileries, at four o'clock in the afternoon, principally for the purpose of examining the state of the finances and of Law's Bank and India Company. It was, in fact, high time to do something to diminish the overgrown disorder and confusion everywhere reigning. For some time there had been complete stagnation in all financial matters; the credit of the King had step by step diminished, private fortune had become more and more uncertain. The bag was at last empty, the cards were cast aside, the last trick was played. The administration of the finances had passed into the hands of La Houssaye, and his first act was to call the attention of the Regency Council to the position of the bank and the company. We were prepared to hear that things were in a very bad state, but we were scarcely prepared to find that they so closely resembled utter ruin and bankruptcy.

I need not relate all that passed at this council; the

substance of it is enough. From the statement there of M. le Duc d'Orléans, it appeared that Law had issued 1,200,000,000 livres of bank notes more than he ought to have issued. The first 600,000,000 livres had not done much harm, because they had been kept locked up in the bank; but after the 22nd of May, another issue of 600,000,000 had taken place, and been circulated among the public, without the knowledge of the Regent, without the authorisation of any decree. "For this," said M. le Duc d'Orléans, "Law deserved to be hanged, but under the circumstances of the case, I drew him from his embarrassment, by an ante-dated decree, ordering the issue of this quantity of notes."

Thereupon M. le Duc said to the Regent, "But, Monsieur, why, knowing this, did you allow him to leave the realm?"

"It was you who furnished him with the means to do so," replied M. le Duc d'Orléans.

"I never asked you to allow him to quit the country," rejoined M. le Duc.

"But," insisted the Regent, "it was you yourself who sent him his passports."

"That's true," replied M. le Duc, "but it was you who gave them to me to send to him; but I never asked you for them, or to let him leave the realm. I know that I have the credit for it amongst the public, and I am glad of this opportunity to explain here the facts of the case. I was against the proposition for sending M. Law to the Bastille, or to any other prison, because I believed that it was not to your interest to sanction this, after having made use of him as you had; but I never asked you to let him leave the realm, and I beg you,

Monsieur, in presence of the King, and before all these gentlemen, to say if I ever did."

"'Tis true," replied the Regent, "you never asked me; I allowed him to go, because I thought his presence in France would injure public credit, and the operations of the public."

"So far was I from asking you," said M. le Duc, "that if you had done me the honour to demand my opinion, I should have advised you to take good care not to let him depart from the country."

This strange conversation, which roused our astonishment to an incredible point, and which was sustained with so much out-spoken freedom by M. le Duc, demands a word or two of explanation.

M. le Duc was one of those who, without spending a farthing, had drawn millions from Law's notes and shares. He had had large allotments of the latter, and now that they had become utterly valueless, he had been obliged to make the best of a bad bargain, by voluntarily giving them up, in order to lighten the real responsibilities of the Company. This he had done at the commencement of the Council, M. le Prince de Conti also. But let me explain at greater length.

The 22nd of May, the day of the decree, was the period at which commenced the final decay of the Company, and of the bank, and the extinction of all confidence by the sad discovery that there was no longer any money wherewith to pay the bank notes, they being so prodigiously in excess of the coin. After this, each step had been but a stumble: each operation a very feeble palliation. Days and weeks had been gained, obscurity had been allowed to give more chance, solely

from fear of disclosing the true and terrible state of affairs, and the extent of the public ruin. Law could not wash his hands of all this before the world; he could not avoid passing for the inventor and instrument, and he would have run great risk at the moment when all was unveiled. M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, to satisfy his own prodigality, and the prodigious avidity of his friends, had compelled Law to issue so many millions of livres of notes more than he had any means of paying, and who had thus precipitated him into the abyss, could not let him run the chance of perishing, still less to save him, could he proclaim himself the real criminal. It was to extricate himself from this embarrassment that he made Law leave the country, when he saw that the monstrous deceit could no longer be hidden.

This manifestation, which so strongly interested the shareholders, and the holders of bank notes, especially those who had received shares or notes as favours due to their authority, and who could show no other title to them, threw every one into despair. The most important holders, such as the Princes of the Blood, and others, whose profits had been immense, had by force or industry delayed this manifestation as long as possible. As they knew the real state of affairs, they felt that the moment all the world knew it also, their gains would cease, and their paper become worthless,—that paper from which they had drawn so much, and which had not cost them a farthing! This is what induced M. le Duc d'Orléans to hide from them the day of this manifestation, so as to avoid being importuned by them; and by a surprise, to take from them the power of preparing any opposition to the measures it was proposed

to carry out. M. le Duc, when he learned this, flew into a fury, and hence the strange scene between him and M. le Duc d'Orléans, which scandalised and terrified everybody in the Council.

M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, from taste, and afterwards from necessity, lived upon schemes and trickery, thought he had done marvels in saddling M. le Duc with the passport of Law. He wished to lay the blame of Law's departure upon M. le Duc; but as I have shown, he was defeated by his own weapons. He had to do with a man as sharp as himself. M. le Duc, who knew he had nothing to fear, would not allow it to be supposed that he had sanctioned the flight of the financier. That was why he pressed M. le Duc d'Orléans so pitilessly, and forced him to admit that he had never asked him to allow Law to leave the country.

The great and terrible fact brought out by this Council was, that Law, without the knowledge or authority of the Regent, had issued and disseminated among the public 600,000,000 livres of notes; and not only without being authorised by any edict, but contrary to express prohibition. But when the Regent announced this, who did he suppose would credit it? Who could believe that Law would have had the hardihood to issue notes at this rate without the sanction and approbation of his master?

However, to leave once and for all these unpleasant matters, let me say what was resolved upon by way of remedy to the embarrassments discovered to exist. The junction of the India Company with the bank, which had taken place during the previous February, had led to transactions which made the former debtor

to the latter to an immense amount. But the bank being a governmental establishment, the King became thus the creditor of the Company. It was decreed, in fact, that the Company should be considered as debtor to the King. It was decided, however, that other debtors should receive first attention. Many private people had invested their money in the shares of the Company. It was not thought just that by the debt of the Company to the King, these people should be ruined; or, on the other hand, that those who had left the Company in good time, who had converted their shares into notes, or who had bought them at a low price in the market, should profit by the misfortune of the *bonâ fide* shareholders. Accordingly, commissioners, it was decided, were to be named, to liquidate all these papers and parchments, and annul those which did not proceed from real purchases.

M. le Duc said, upon this, "There are at least eighty thousand families, the whole of whose wealth consists of these effects; how are they to live during this liquidation?"

La Houssaye replied, that so many commissioners could be named, that the work would soon be done.

And so the Council ended.

But I must, perforce, retrace my steps at this point to many other matters, which I have left far behind me in going on at once to the end of this financial labyrinth. And first let me tell what happened to that monstrous personage, Alberoni, how he fell from the lofty pinnacle of power on which he had placed himself, and lost all consideration and all importance in the fall. The story is mightily curious and instructive.

CHAPTER XV.

Character of Alberoni—His Grand Projects—Plots against Him—The Queen's Nurse—The Scheme against the Cardinal—His Fall—Theft of a Will—Reception in Italy—His Adventures There.

ALBERONI had made himself detested by all Europe,—for all Europe, in one way or another, was the victim of his crimes. He was detested as the absolute master of Spain, whose guides were perfidy, ambition, personal interest, views always oblique, often caprice, sometimes madness; and whose selfish desires, varied and diversified according to the fantasy of the moment, were hidden under schemes always uncertain and oftentimes impossible of execution. Accustomed to keep the King and Queen of Spain in chains, and in the narrowest and obscurest prison, where he allowed them to communicate with no one, and made them see, feel, and breathe through him, and blindly obey his every wish; he caused all Spain to tremble, and had annihilated all power there, except his own, by the most violent acts, constraining himself in no way, despising his master and his mistress, whose will and whose authority he had utterly absorbed. He braved successively all the powers of Europe, and aspired to nothing less than to deceive them all, then to

govern them, making them serve all his ends; and seeing at last his cunning exhausted, tried to execute alone, and without allies, the plan he had formed.

This plan was nothing less than to take away from the Emperor all that the peace of Utrecht had left him in Italy; all that the Spanish house of Austria had possessed there; to dominate the Pope and the King of Sicily; to deprive the Emperor of the help of France and England, by exciting the first against the Regent through the schemes of the ambassador Cellamare and the Duc du Maine; and by sending King James to England, by the aid of the North, so as to keep King George occupied with a civil war. In the end he wished to profit by all these disorders, by transporting into Italy (which his cardinalship made him regard as a safe asylum against all reverses) the immense treasures he had pillaged and collected in Spain, under pretext of sending the sums necessary to sustain the war, and the conquests he intended to make; and this last project was, perhaps, the motive power of all the rest. The madness of these schemes, and his obstinacy in clinging to them, were not discovered until afterwards. The astonishment then was great indeed, upon discovering the poverty of the resources with which he thought himself capable of carrying out these wild projects. Yet he had made such prodigious preparations for war, that he had entirely exhausted the country without rendering it able for a moment to oppose the powers of Europe.

Alberoni, abhorred in Spain as a cruel tyrant, in France, in England, in Rome, and by the Emperor as an implacable and personal enemy, did not seem to have

the slightest uneasiness. Yet he might have had some, and with good cause, at the very moment when he fancied himself most powerful and most secure.

The Regent and the Abbé Dubois, who for a long time had only too many reasons to regard Alberoni as their personal enemy, were unceasingly occupied in silently plotting his fall; they believed the present moment favourable, and did not fail to profit by it. How they did so is a curious fact, which, to my great regret, has never reached me. M. le Duc d'Orléans survived Dubois such a few months that many things I should have liked to have gained information upon, I had not the time to ask him about; and this was one. All I know is, that what Alberoni always dreaded, at last happened to him. He trembled at every one, no matter of how little importance, who arrived from Parma (the Queen of Spain, it has not been forgotten, was of that Duchy); he omitted nothing by the aid of the Duke of Parma, and by other means, to hinder the Parmesans from coming to Madrid; and was in terror of the few of those whose journey he could not hinder, and whose dismissal he could not obtain.

Among these few people there was nobody he feared so much as the Queen's nurse, whom he drew up with a round turn occasionally, so to speak, but less from policy than ill-temper. This nurse, who was a rough countrywoman of Parma, was named Donna Piscatori Laura. She had arrived in Spain some years after the Queen, who had always liked her, and who made her, shortly after her arrival, her *assofcta*, that is to say, her chief *femme de chambre*, an office more considerable in Spain than with us. Laura had brought her husband

with her, a peasant in every way, seen and known by nobody; but Laura had intelligence, shrewdness, cleverness, and ambitious views, in spite of the external vulgarity of her manners, which she had preserved either from habit, or from policy, to make herself less suspected. Like all persons of this extraction, she was thoroughly selfish. She was not unaware how impatiently Alberoni endured her presence, and feared her favour with the Queen, whom he wished to possess alone; and, more sensible to the gentle taps she from time to time received from him, than to his ordinary attentions, she looked upon him simply as a very formidable enemy, who kept her within very narrow limits, who hindered her from profiting by the favour of the Queen, and whose design was to send her back to Parma, and to leave nothing undone until he had carried it out.

This is all the information I have ever been able to obtain. The probability is, that Donna Laura was gained by the money of the Regent and the intrigues of Dubois; and that she succeeded in convincing the Queen of Spain that Alberoni was a minister who had ruined the country, who was the sole obstacle in the way of peace, and who had sacrificed everything and everybody to his personal views, their Catholic Majesties included. However, as I relate only what I know, I shall be very brief upon this interesting event.

Laura succeeded. Alberoni, at the moment he least expected it, received a note from the King of Spain ordering him to withdraw at once, without attempting to see him or the Queen, or to write to them; and to leave Spain in twice twenty-four hours! An officer of

the guards was to accompany him until his departure. How this overruling order was received, and what the Cardinal did, I know not; I only know that he obeyed it, and took the road for Arragon. So few precautions had been taken, that he carried off an immense number of papers, money, and jewels; and it was not until a few days had elapsed, that the King of Spain was informed that the original will of Charles the Second could not be found. It was at once supposed that Alberoni had carried away this precious document (by which Charles the Second named Philippe V. King of Spain), in order to offer it, perhaps, to the Emperor, so as to gain his favour and good graces. Alberoni was stopped. It was not without trouble, the most terrible menaces, and loud cries from him, that he surrendered the testament, and some other important papers which it was perceived were missing. The terror he had inspired was so profound, that, until this moment, no one had dared to show his joy, or to speak, though the tyrant was gone. But this event reassured every one against his return, and the result was an unexampled overflow of delight, of imprecations, and of reports against him, to the King and Queen, of the most public occurrences (which they alone were ignorant of) and of private misdeeds, which it was no longer thought necessary to hide.

M. le Duc d'Orléans did not restrain his joy, still less the Abbé Dubois; it was their work which had overthrown their personal enemy; with him fell the wall of separation, so firmly erected by Alberoni between the Regent and the King of Spain; and (at the same time) the sole obstacle against peace. This last reason caused joy to burst out in Italy, in Vienna, in London; and peace between France and Spain soon resulted.

The allied princes felicitated themselves on what had happened; even the Dutch were ravished to be delivered of a minister so double-dealing, so impetuous, so powerful. M. le Duc d'Orléans dispatched the Chevalier de Morcieu, a very skilful and intelligent man, and certainly in the hands of the Abbé Dubois, to the extreme confines of the frontiers to wait for Alberoni, accompanying him until the moment of his embarkation in Provence for Italy; with orders never to lose sight of him, to make him avoid the large towns and principal places as much as possible; suffer no honours to be rendered to him; above all, to hinder him from communicating with anybody, or anybody with him; in a word, to conduct him civilly, like a prisoner under guard.

Morcieu executed to the letter this disagreeable commission; all the more necessary, because, entirely disgraced as was Alberoni, everything was to be forced from him while traversing a great part of France, where all who were adverse to the Regent might have recourse to him. Therefore it was not without good reason that every kind of liberty was denied him.

It may be imagined what was suffered by a man so impetuous, and so accustomed to unlimited power; but he succeeded in accommodating himself to such a great and sudden change of condition; in maintaining his self-possession; in subjecting himself to no refusals; in being sage and measured in his manners; very reserved in speech, with an air as though he cared for nothing; and in adapting himself to everything without questions, without pretension, without complaining, dissimulating everything, and untiringly pretending to regard Morcieu as an accompaniment of honour. He re-

ceived, then, no sort of civility on the part of the Regent, of Dubois, or of anybody; and performed the day's journeys, arranged by Morcieu, without stopping, almost without suite, until he arrived on the shores of the Mediterranean, where he immediately embarked and passed to the Genoa coast.

Alberoni, delivered of his Argus, and arrived in Italy, found himself in another trouble by the anger of the Emperor, who would suffer him nowhere, and by the indignation of the Court of Rome, which prevailed, on this occasion, over respect for the purple. Alberoni for a long time was forced to keep out of the way, hidden and a fugitive, and was not able to approach Rome until the death of the Pope. The remainder of the life of this most extraordinary man is not a subject for these memoirs. But what ought not to be forgotten is the last mark of rage, despair, and madness that he gave in traversing France. He wrote to M. le Duc d'Orléans, offering to supply him with the means of making a most dangerous war against Spain; and at Marseilles, ready to embark, he again wrote to reiterate the same offers, and press them on the Regent.

I cannot refrain from commenting here upon the blindness of allowing ecclesiastics to meddle with public affairs; above all, cardinals, whose special privilege is immunity from everything most infamous and most degrading. Ingratitude, infidelity, revolt, felony, independence, are the chief characteristics of these eminent criminals.

Of Alberoni's latter days I will say but a few words.

At the death of Clement XI., legal proceedings that had been taken to deprive Alberoni of his cardinalship,

came to an end. Wandering and hidden in Italy, he was summoned to attend a conclave for the purpose of electing a new Pope. Alberoni was the opprobrium of the sacred college; proceedings, as I have said, were in progress to deprive him of his cardinalship. The King and Queen of Spain evidently stimulated those proceedings: the Pope just dead had opposed him; but the cardinals would not agree to his disgrace; they would not consent to strip him of his dignity. The example would have been too dangerous. That a cardinal, prince, or great nobleman, should surrender his hat in order to marry, the store of his house demands it; well and good; but to see a cardinal deprive himself of his hat by way of penitence, is what his brethren will not endure. A cardinal may be poisoned, stabbed, got rid of altogether, but lose his dignity he never can. Rome must be infallible, or she is nothing.

It was decided, that if, at the election of the new Pope, Alberoni were not admitted to take part in the proceedings, he always might protest against them, and declare them irregular. Therefore he was, as I have said, admitted to the conclave. He arrived in Rome, without display, in his own coach, and was received in the conclave with the same honours as all the other cardinals, and performed all the duties of his position.

A few days after the election, he absented himself from Rome, as though to see whether proceedings would be continued against him. But they fell of themselves. The new Pope had no interest in them. The cardinals wished only for silence. Spain felt at last the inutility of her cries. Dubois was in favour of throwing a veil over his former crimes, so that, after

a short absence, Alberoni hired in Rome a magnificent palace, and returned there for good, with the attendance, expense, and display his Spanish spoils supplied. He found himself face to face with the Cardinal Giudice, and with Madame des Ursins. The three formed a rare triangle, which caused many a singular scene in Rome. After seeing them both die, Alberoni became legate at Ferrara, continued there a long time, little esteemed at Rome, where he is now living, sound in mind and body, and eighty-six years of age.

CHAPTER XVI.

Meetings of the Council—A Kitten—The Archbishopric of Cambrai—Scandalous Conduct of Dubois—The Consecration—I Persuade the Regent Not to Go—He Promises Not—Breaks His Word—Madame de Parabère—The Ceremony—Story of the Comte de Horn.

THE King attended the Royal Council for the first time on Sunday, the 18th of February, 1720. He said nothing while there, or on going away, excepting that when M. le Duc d'Orléans, who feared he might grow weary of the proceedings, proposed to him to leave, he said he would stop to the end. After this he did not come always, but often, invariably remaining to the last, without moving or speaking. His presence changed nothing in the order of our arrangements, because his arm-chair was always there, alone, at the end of the table, and M. le Duc d'Orléans, whether his Majesty came or not, had but a "stool" similar to those we all sat upon. Step by step this council had been so much increased, that now, by the entry of the Duc de Berwick, it numbered sixteen members! To say truth, we were far too many, and we had several among us who would have been much better away. I had tried, but in vain, to make the Regent see this. He did see at last, but it was too late; and meanwhile we

were, as I have stated, sixteen in the council. I remember that one day, when the King came, a kitten followed him, and some time after jumped upon him, and thence upon the table, where it began to walk; the Duc de Noailles immediately crying out, because he did not like cats. M. le Duc d'Orléans wished to drive the animal away. I smiled, and said, "Oh, leave the kitten alone, it will make the seventeenth."

M. le Duc d'Orléans burst out laughing at this, and looked at the company, who laughed also, the King as well. His Majesty briefly spoke of it to me on the morrow, as though appreciating the joke, which, by the way, immediately ran over all Paris.

The Abbé Dubois still maintained his pernicious influence over the Regent, and still looked forward to a cardinalship as the reward of his scheming, his baseness, and his perfidy. In the meantime, the Archbishopric of Cambrai became vacant (by the death, at Rome, of the Cardinal Trémoille). That is to say, the richest archbishopric, and one of the best posts in the Church. The Abbé Dubois was only tonsured; 150,000 livres a year tempted him, and perhaps this position, from which he could more easily elevate himself to the cardinalship. Impudent as he might be, powerful as might be the empire he had acquired over his master, he was much embarrassed, and masked his effrontery under a trick. He said to M. le Duc d'Orléans, he had a pleasant dream; and related to him that he had dreamt he was Archbishop of Cambrai! The Regent, who smelt the rat, turned on his heel, and said nothing. Dubois, more and more embarrassed, stammered, and paraphrased his dream; then, re-assuring himself by an effort, asked,

in an off-hand manner, why he should not obtain it, His Royal Highness, by his will alone, being able thus to make his fortune.

M. le Duc d'Orléans was indignant, even terrified, little scrupulous as he might be as to the choice of bishops, and in a tone of contempt replied to Dubois, "What, *you* Archbishop of Cambrai!" making him thus feel his low origin, and still more the debauchery and scandal of his life. Dubois was, however, too far advanced to stop on the road, and cited examples; unfortunately these were only too many.

M. le Duc d'Orléans, less touched by such bad reasoning than embarrassed how to resist the ardour of a man whom for a long time he had not dared to contradict, tried to get out of the difficulty, by saying, "But you being such a scoundrel, where will you find another to consecrate you?"

"Oh, if it's only that!" exclaimed Dubois, "the thing is done. I know very well who will consecrate me; he is not far from here."

"And who the devil is he who will dare to do so?" asked the Regent.

"Would you like to know?" replied the Abbé, "and does the matter rest only upon that?"

"Well, who?" said the Regent.

"Your chief chaplain," replied Dubois, "who is close at hand. Nothing will please him better; I will run and speak to him."

And thereupon he embraces the knees of M. le Duc d'Orléans (who, caught thus in his own trap, had not the strength to refuse), runs to the Bishop of Nantes, says that he is to have Cambrai, begs the Bishop to con-

secrate him, and receives his promise to do so, returns, wheels round, tells M. le Duc d'Orléans that his chief chaplain has agreed to the consecration; thanks, praises, admires the Regent, fixes more and more firmly the office by regarding it as settled, and by persuading M. le Duc d'Orléans, who dares not say no;—and in this manner was Dubois made Archbishop of Cambrai!

The extreme scandal of this nomination caused a strange stir. Impudent as was the Abbé Dubois, he was extremely embarrassed; and M. le Duc d'Orléans so much ashamed, that it was soon remarked he was humbled if you spoke to him upon the subject. The next question was, from whom Dubois was to receive holy orders? The Cardinal de Noailles was applied to, but he stoutly refused to assist in any way. It may be imagined what an affront this was to Dubois. He never in his life pardoned the Cardinal, who was nevertheless universally applauded for his refusal. But the Abbé Dubois was not a man to be daunted by an ordinary obstacle; he turned his glances elsewhere, and soon went through all the formalities necessary.

The very day he took orders there was a Regency Council at the old Louvre, because the measles, which were then very prevalent, even in the Palais Royal, hindered us from meeting as usual in the Tuileries. A Regency Council without the Abbé Dubois present was a thing to marvel at, and yet his arrival to-day caused even more surprise than his absence would have caused. But he was not a man to waste his time in thanksgiving for what had just happened to him. This was a new scandal, which revived and aggravated the first. Everybody had arrived in the cabinet of the council,

M. le Duc d'Orléans also; we were scattered about and standing. I was in a corner of the lower end, when I saw Dubois enter in a stout coat, with his ordinary bearing. We did not expect him on such a day, and naturally enough cried out surprised. M. le Prince de Conti, with his father's sneering manner, spoke to the Abbé Dubois, on his appearance among us on the very day of taking orders, and expressed his surprise at it with the most pathetic malignity imaginable.

Dubois, who had not had time to reply one word, let him say to the end; then coldly observed, that if he had been a little more familiar with ancient history, he would not have found what astonished him very strange, since he (the Abbé) had only followed the example of Saint-Ambrose, whose ordination he began to relate. I did not wait for his recital; at the mere mention of Saint-Ambrose I flew to the other end of the cabinet, horror-struck at the comparison Dubois had just made, and fearing lest I should be tempted to say to him, that the ordination of Saint-Ambrose had been forced upon him in spite of his resistance. This impious citation of Saint-Ambrose ran all over the town with the effect that may be imagined. The nomination and this ordination took place towards the end of February.

I will finish at once all that relates to this matter, so as not to separate it, or have to return to it. Dubois had his bulls at the commencement of May, and the consecration was fixed for Sunday the 9th of June. All Paris and the Court were invited to it, myself excepted. I was on bad terms with Dubois, because I in no way spared him when with M. le Duc d'Orléans. He on his side, fearing the power I had over the Regent, the lib-

erty I enjoyed with him, and the freedom with which I spoke to him, did as much as he could to injure me, and to weaken the confidence of M. le Duc d'Orléans in me. Dubois and I continued, nevertheless, to be on good terms with each other in appearance, but it was in appearance only.

This consecration was to be magnificent, and M. le Duc d'Orléans was to be present at it. If the nomination and the ordination of the Abbé Dubois had caused much stir, scandal, and horror, the superb preparations for the consecration caused even more. Great was the indignation against M. le Duc d'Orléans. I went, therefore, to him the evening before this strange ceremony was to take place, to beg him not to attend it. I represented to him that the nomination and ordination of the Abbé Dubois had created the most frightful effect upon the public, and that the consecration of a man of such low extraction, and whose manners and mode of life were so notorious, would create more. I added, that if he attended this ceremony, people would say it was simply for the purpose of mocking God, and insulting His Church; that the effect of this would be terrible, and always much to be feared; and that people would say the Abbé Dubois abused the mastery he had over him, and that this new evidence of dependence would draw down upon him hatred, disdain, and shame, the results of which were to be dreaded. I concluded by saying, that I spoke to him as his disinterested servitor; that his absence or his presence at this consecration would change in nothing the fortune of the Abbé Dubois, who would be Archbishop of Cambrai all the same without prostituting his master in the eyes of all France, and of

all Europe, by compelling him to be guilty of a measure to which it would be seen he had been urged by force. I conjured him not to go; and to show him on what terms I was with the Abbé Dubois, I explained to him I was the sole man of rank he had not invited to his consecration; but that, notwithstanding this circumstance, if he would give me his word that he would not go, I on my side would agree to go, though my horror at doing so would be very great.

My discourse, pronounced with warmth and developed with freedom, was listened to from beginning to end. I was surprised to hear the Regent say I was right, but I opened my eyes very wide when he embraced me, said that I spoke like a true friend, and that he would give me his word, and stick to it, he would not go. We parted upon this, I strengthening him in his resolution, promising anew I would go, and he thanking me for this effort. He showed no impatience, no desire that I should go; for I knew him well, and I examined him to the very bottom of his soul, and quitted him much pleased at having turned him from a measure so disgraceful and so extraordinary. Who could have guessed that he would not keep his word? But so it happened.

Although as I have said I felt sure of him, yet the extreme weakness of this prince, and the empire the Abbé Dubois had acquired over him, induced me to be quite certain of him before going to the consecration. I sent therefore the next morning to the Palais Royal to inquire after M. le Duc d'Orléans, keeping my carriage all ready for a start. But I was much confused, accustomed as I might be to his miserable vacillation,

to hear from the person I had sent, that he had just seen the Regent jump into his coach, surrounded by all the pomp usual on grand occasions, and set out for the consecration. I had my horses put up at once, and locked myself into my cabinet.

A day or two after I learnt from a friend of Madame de Parabère, then the reigning Sultana, but not a faithful one, that M. le Duc d'Orléans had been with her the previous night, and had spoken to her in praise of me, saying he would not go to the ceremony, and that he was very grateful to me for having dissuaded him from going. La Parabère praised me, admitted I was right, but her conclusion was that he would go.

M. le Duc d'Orléans, surprised, said to her she was then mad.

"Be it so," replied she, "but you will go."

"But I tell you I will not go," he rejoined.

"Yes, yes, I tell you," said she; "you will go."

"But," replied he, "this is admirable. You say M. de Saint-Simon is quite right, why then should I go?"

"Because I wish it," said she.

"Very good," replied he, "and why do you wish I should go—what madness is this?"

"I wish it because———," said she.

"Oh, because," replied he, "that's no reason; say why you wish it."

(After some dispute) "You obstinately desire then to know? Are you not aware that the Abbé Dubois and I quarreled four days ago, and that we have not yet made it up. He mixes in everything. He will know that you have been with me to-night. If to-morrow you do not go to his consecration, he will not fail

to believe it is I who have hindered you; nothing will take this idea out of his head; he will never pardon me; he will undermine in a hundred ways my credit with you, and finish by embroiling us. But I don't wish such a thing to happen, and for that reason you must go to his consecration, although M. de Saint-Simon is right."

Thereupon ensued a feeble debate, then resolution and promise to go, which was very faithfully kept.

As for me I could only deplore the feebleness of the Regent, to whom I never afterwards spoke of this consecration, or he to me; but he was very much ashamed of himself, and much embarrassed with me afterwards. I do not know whether he carried his weakness so far as to tell Dubois what I had said to hinder him from going to the ceremony or whether the Abbé was told by La Parabère, who thought thus to take credit to herself for having changed the determination of M. le Duc d'Orléans, and to show her credit over him. But Dubois was perfectly informed of it, and never pardoned me.

The Val de Grace was chosen for the consecration as being a royal monastery, the most magnificent of Paris, and the most singular church. It was superbly decorated; all France was invited, and nobody dared to stop away or to be out of sight during the whole ceremony.

There were tribunes with blinds prepared for the ambassadors and Protestant ministers. There was another more magnificent for M. le Duc d'Orléans and M. le Duc de Chartres, whom he took there. There were places for the ladies, and as M. le Duc d'Orléans entered by the monastery, and his tribune was within,

it was open to all comers, so that outside and inside were filled with refreshments of all kinds, which officers distributed in profusion. This disorder continued all day, on account of the large number of tables that were served without and within for the subordinate people of the fête and all who liked to thrust themselves in. The chief gentlemen of the chamber of M. le Duc d'Orléans and his chief officers did the business of the ceremony, placed distinguished people in their seats, received them, conducted them, and other of his officers paid similar attentions to less considerable people, while all the watch and all the police were occupied in looking after the arrival and departure of the carriages in proper and regular order.

During the consecration, which was but little decent as far as the consecrated and the spectators were concerned, above all when leaving the building, M. le Duc d'Orléans evinced his satisfaction at finding so many considerable people present, and then went away to Asnières to dine with Madame Parabère—very glad that a ceremony was over upon which he had bestowed only indirect attention, from the commencement to the end. All the prelates, the distinguished Abbés, and a considerable number of the laity, were invited during the consecration by the chief officers of M. le Duc d'Orléans to dine at the Palais Royal. The same officers did the honours of the feast, which was served with the most splendid abundance and delicacy. There were two services of thirty covers each, in a large room of the grand suite of apartments, filled with the most considerable people of Paris, and several other tables equally well served in adjoining rooms for people less

distinguished. M. le Duc d'Orléans gave to the new Archbishop a diamond of great price to serve him as a ring.

All this day was given up to that sort of triumph which draws down neither the approbation of man nor the blessing of God. I saw nothing of it all, however, and M. le Duc d'Orléans and I never spoke of it.

The Comte de Horn had been in Paris for the last two months, leading an obscure life of gaming and debauchery. He was a man of two-and-twenty, tall and well made, of that ancient and grand family of Horn, known in the eleventh century among the little dynasties of the Low Countries, and afterwards by a long series of illustrious generations. The Comte de Horn in question had been made captain in the Austrian army, less on account of his youth than because he was such an ill-behaved dog, causing vast trouble to his mother and brother. They heard so much of the disorderly life he was leading in Paris, that they sent there a confidential gentleman with money to pay his debts to try and persuade him to return, and failing in this, to implore the authority of the Regent (to whom, through Madame, the Horns were related), in order to compel him to do so. As ill-luck would have it, this gentleman arrived the day after the Comte had committed the crime I am about to relate.

On Friday, the 22nd of March, 1720, he went to the Rue Quincampoix, wishing, he said, to buy 100,000 écus worth of shares, and for that purpose made an appointment with a stock-broker in a cabaret. The stock-broker came there with his pocket-book and his shares; the Comte de Horn came also, accompanied, as

he said, by two of his friends; a moment after, they all three threw themselves upon this unfortunate stock-broker; the Comte de Horn stabbed him several times with a poniard, and seized his pocket-book; one of his pretended friends (a Piedmontese named Mille), seeing that the stock-broker was not dead, finished the work. At the noise they made the people of the house came, not sufficiently quick to prevent the murder, but in time to render themselves masters of the assassins, and to arrest them. In the midst of the scuffle, the other cut-throat escaped, but the Comte de Horn and Mille were not so fortunate. The cabaret people sent for the officers of justice, who conducted the criminals to the Conciergerie. This horrible crime, committed in broad daylight, immediately made an immense stir, and several kinsmen of this illustrious family at once went to M. le Duc d'Orléans to beg for mercy; but the Regent avoided speaking to them as much as possible, and very rightly ordered full and prompt justice to be done.

At last, the relatives of Horn pènetrated to the Regent: they tried to make the Count pass for mad, saying even that he had an uncle confined in an asylum, and begging that he might be confined also. But the reply was, that madmen who carried their madness to fury could not be got rid of too quickly. Repulsed in this manner, they represented what an infamy it would be to their illustrious family, related to nearly all the sovereigns of Europe, to have one of its members tried and condemned. M. le Duc d'Orléans replied that the infamy was in the crime, and not in the punishment. They pressed him upon the honour the family had in

being related to him. "Very well, gentlemen," said he, "I will divide the shame with you."

The trial was neither long nor difficult. Law and the Abbé Dubois, so interested in the safety of the stock-jobbers (without whom the paper must have fallen at once), supported M. le Duc d'Orléans might and main, in order to render him inexorable, and he, to avoid the persecutions he unceasingly experienced on the other side, left nothing undone in order to hurry the Parliament into a decision; the affair, therefore, went full speed, and it seemed likely that the Comte de Horn would be broken on the wheel.

The relatives, no longer hoping to save the criminal, thought only of obtaining a commutation of the sentence. Some of them came to me, asking me to save them: though I was not related to the Horn family, they explained to me, that death on the wheel would throw into despair all that family, and everybody connected with it in the Low Countries, and in Germany, because in those parts there was a great and important difference between the punishments of persons of quality who had committed crimes; that decapitation in no way influenced the family of the decapitated, but that death on the wheel threw such infamy upon it, that the uncles, aunts, brothers, and sisters, and the three next generations, were excluded from entering into any noble chapter, which, in addition to the shame, was a very injurious deprivation, annihilating the family's chance of ecclesiastic preferment; this reason touched me, and I promised to do my best with M. le Duc d'Orléans to obtain a commutation of the sentence.

I was going off to La Ferté to profit by the leisure

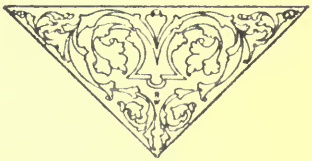
of Holy Week. I went therefore to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and explained to him what I had just learnt. I said that after the detestable crime the Comte de Horn had committed, every one must feel that he was worthy of death; but that every one could not admit it was necessary to break him on the wheel, in order to satisfy the ends of justice. I showed him how the family would suffer if this sentence were carried out, and I concluded by proposing to the Regent a *mezzo termine,* such as he was so fond of.

I suggested that the decree ordering death by the wheel should be pronounced. That another decree should at the same time be prepared and kept ready signed and sealed, with only a date to fill in, revoking the first, and changing the punishment into decapitation. That at the last moment this second decree should be produced, and immediately afterwards the head of the Comte de Horn be cut off. M. le Duc d'Orléans offered no objection, but consented at once to my plan. I said to him, by way of conclusion, that I was going to set out the next day, and that I begged him not to be shaken in the determination he had just formed, by the entreaties of Dubois or Law, both of whom were strongly in favour of punishment by the wheel. He assured me he would keep firm; reiterated the assurance; I took leave of him; and the next day went to La Ferté.

He was firm, however, in his usual manner. Dubois and Law besieged him, and led the attack so well that he gave in, and the first thing I learnt at La Ferté was that the Comte de Horn had been broken alive on the wheel at the Grêve, on Holy Friday, the 26th March, 1720, about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and the scoun-

drel Mille with him on the same scaffold, after having both suffered torture.

The result of this was as I anticipated. The Horn family and all the grand nobility of the Low Countries, many of Germany, were outraged, and contained themselves neither in words nor in writings. Some of them even talked of strange vengeance, and a long time after the death of M. le Duc d'Orléans, I met with certain of the gentlemen upon whose hearts the memory of this punishment still weighed heavily.



CHAPTER XVII.

Quarrel of the King of England with His Son—Schemes of Dubois—Marriage of Brissac—His Death—Birth of the Young Pretender — Cardinalate of Dubois — Illness of the King—His Convalescence—A Wonderful Lesson—Prudence of the Regent—Insinuations against Him.

FOR a long time a species of war had been declared between the King of England and his son, the Prince of Wales, which had caused much scandal; and which had enlisted the Court on one side, and made much stir in the Parliament. George had more than once broken out with indecency against his son; he had long since driven him from the palace, and would not see him. He had so cut down his income that he could scarcely subsist. The father never could endure this son, because he did not believe him to be his own. He had more than suspected the Duchess, his wife, to be in relations with Count Königsmarck. He surprised him one morning leaving her chamber; threw him into a hot oven, and shut up his wife in a château for the rest of her days.

The Prince of Wales, who found himself ill-treated for a cause of which he was personally innocent, had always borne with impatience the presence of his mother and the aversion of his father. The Princess

of Wales, who had much sense, intelligence, grace, and art, had softened things as much as possible; and the King was unable to refuse her his esteem, or avoid loving her. She had conciliated all England; and her Court, always large, boasted of the presence of the most accredited and the most distinguished persons. The Prince of Wales feeling his strength, no longer studied his father, and blamed the ministers with words that at least alarmed them. They feared the credit of the Princess of Wales; feared lest they should be attacked by the Parliament, which often indulges in this pleasure. These considerations became more and more pressing as they discovered what was brewing against them; plans such as would necessarily have rebounded upon the King. They communicated their fears to him, and indeed tried to make it up with his son, on certain conditions, through the medium of the Princess of Wales, who, on her side, felt all the consciousness of sustaining a party against the King, and who always had sincerely desired peace in the royal family. She profited by this conjecture; made use of the ascendency she had over her husband, and the reconciliation was concluded. The King gave a large sum to the Prince of Wales, and consented to see him. The ministers were saved, and all appeared forgotten.

The excess to which things had been carried between father and son had not only kept the entire nation attentive to the intestine disorders ready to arise, but had made a great stir all over Europe; each power tried to blow this fire into a blaze, or to stifle it according as interest suggested. The Archbishop of Cam-

brai, whom I shall continue to call the Abbé Dubois, was just then very anxiously looking out for his cardinal's hat, which he was to obtain through the favour of England, acting upon that of the Emperor with the Court of Rome. Dubois, overjoyed at the reconciliation which had taken place, wished to show this in a striking manner, in order to pay his court to the King of England. He named, therefore, the Duc de la Force to go to England, and compliment King George on the happy event that had occurred.

The demonstration of joy that had been resolved on in France was soon known in England. George, annoyed by the stir that his domestic squabbles had made throughout all Europe, did not wish to see it prolonged by the sensation that this solemn envoy would cause. He begged the Regent, therefore, not to send him one. As the scheme had been determined on only in order to please him, the journey of the Duc de la Force was abandoned almost as soon as declared. Dubois had the double credit, with the King of England, of having arranged this demonstration of joy, and of giving it up; in both cases solely for the purpose of pleasing his Britannic Majesty.

Towards the end of this year, 1720, the Duc de Brissac married Madlle. Pecoil, a very rich heiress, whose father was a maitre des requêtes, and whose mother was daughter of Le Gendre, a very wealthy merchant of Rouen. The father of Madlle. Pecoil was a citizen of Lyons, a wholesale dealer, and extremely avaricious. He had a large iron safe, or strong-box, filled with money, in a cellar, shut in by an iron door, with a secret lock, and to arrive at which

other doors had to be passed through. He disappeared so long one day, that his wife and two or three valets or servants that he had sought him everywhere. They well knew that he had a hiding-place, because they had sometimes seen him descending into his cellar, flat-candlestick in hand, but no one had ever dared to follow him.

Wondering what had become of him, they descended to the cellar, broke open the doors, and found at last the iron one. They were obliged to send for workmen to break it open, by attacking the wall in which it was fixed. After much labour they entered, and found the old miser dead in his strong-box, the secret spring of which he had apparently not been able to find, after having locked himself in; a horrible end in every respect.

The Brissacs have not been very particular in their alliances for some time, and yet appear no richer. The gold flies away; the dross remains.

I had almost forgotten to say that in the last day of this year, 1720, a Prince of Wales was born at Rome.*

The Prince was immediately baptised by the Bishop of Montefiascone, and named Charles. The event caused a great stir in the Holy City. The Pope sent his compliments to their Britannic Majesties, and forwarded to the King of England (the Pretender) 10,000 Roman crowns; gave him, for his life, a country house at Albano, which until then, he had only lent him, and 2000 crowns to furnish it. A *Te Deum* was sung in the chapel of the Pope, in his presence, and there were rejoicings at Rome. When the Queen of Eng-

* Charles Edward, afterwards known as the Young Pretender.

land was able to see company, Cardinal Tanora came in state, as representative of the Sacred College, to congratulate her.

The birth of the Prince also made much stir at the Court of England, and among the priests and Jacobites of that country. For very different reasons, not only the Catholics and Protestants, enemies of the government, were ravished at it, but nearly all the three realms showed as much joy as they dared; not from any attachment to the dethroned house, but for the satisfaction of seeing a line continue with which they could always menace and oppose their kings and the royal family.

In France we were afraid to show any public feeling upon the event. We were too much in the hands of England; the Regent and Dubois too much the humble servants of the house of Hanover; Dubois especially, waiting, as he was, so anxiously for his cardinal's hat. He did not, as will be seen, have to wait much longer.

The new Pope had given, in writing, a promise to Dubois, that if elected to the chair of St. Peter he would make him cardinal. Time had flown, and the promise was not yet fulfilled. The impatience of Dubois increased with his hopes, and gave him no repose. He was much bewildered when he learnt that, on the 16th of June, 1721, the Pope had elevated to the cardinalship his brother, who for ten years had been Bishop of Terracine and Benedictine monk of Mount Cassini. Dubois had expected that no promotion would be made in which he was not included. But here was a promotion of a single person only.

He was furious; this fury did not last long, however; a month after, that is to say, on the 16th of July, the Pope made him cardinal with Dion Alexander Alboni, nephew of the deceased Pope, and brother of the Cardinal Camarlingue.

Dubois received the news and the compliment that followed with extreme joy, but managed to contain himself with some little decency, and to give all the honour of his nomination to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, sooth to say, had had scarcely anything to do with it. But he could not prevent himself from saying to everybody that what honoured him more than the Roman purple was the unanimous eagerness of all the European powers to procure him this distinction; to press the Pope to award it; to desire that his promotion would be hastened without waiting for their nominations. He incessantly blew these reports about everywhere without ever being out of breath; but nobody was the dupe of them.

Shortly after this, that is, on the last day of July, the King, who had until then been in perfect health, woke with headache and pain in the throat; shivering followed, and towards afternoon, the pains in the head and throat being augmented, he went to bed. I repaired the next day about twelve to inquire after him. I found he had passed a bad night, and that within the last two hours he had grown worse. I saw everywhere consternation. I had the *grandes entrées*, therefore I went into his chamber. I found it very empty. M. le Duc d'Orléans, seated in the chimney corner, looked exceedingly downcast and solitary. I approached him for a moment, then I went to the

King's bed. At this moment Boulduc, one of the apothecaries, gave him something to take. The Duchesse de la Ferté, who, through the Duchesse de Ventadour, her sister, had all the *entrées* as godmother to the King, was at the heels of Boulduc, and turning round to see who was approaching, saw me, and immediately said in a tone neither high nor low, "He is poisoned! he is poisoned!"

"Hold your tongue, Madame," said I. "This is terrible."

But she kept on, and spoke so loudly that I feared the King would hear her. Boulduc and I looked at each other, and I immediately withdrew from the bed and from this mad woman, with whom I was in no way familiar. During this illness, which lasted only five days (but of which the first three were violent) I was much troubled, but at the same time I was exceedingly glad that I had refused to be the King's governor, though the Regent had over and over again pressed me to accept the office. There were too many evil reports in circulation against M. le Duc d'Orléans for me to dream of filling this position. For was I not his bosom friend—known to have been on the most intimate terms with him ever since his childhood—and if anything had happened to excite new suspicions against him, what would not have been said? The thought of this so troubled me during the King's illness, that I used to wake in the night with a start, and, oh, what joy was mine when I remembered that I had not this duty on my head!

The malady, as I have said, was not long, and the convalescence was prompt, which restored tranquillity

and joy, and caused an overflow of *Te Deum* and rejoicing. Helvetius had all the honour of the cure; the doctors had lost their heads, he preserved his, and obstinately proposed bleeding at the foot, at a consultation at which M. le Duc d'Orléans was present: his advice prevailed, change for the better immediately took place, cure soon after.

The Maréchal de Villeroy (the King's governor) did not let slip this occasion for showing all his venom and his baseness; he forgot nothing, left nothing undone in order to fix suspicion upon M. le Duc d'Orléans, and thus pay his court to the robe. No magistrate, however unimportant, could come to the Tuileries whom he did not himself go to with the news of the King and caresses; whilst to the first nobles he was inaccessible. The magistrates of higher standing he allowed to enter at all times into the King's chamber, even to stand by his bed in order to see him, while they who had the *grandes entrées* with difficulty enjoyed a similar privilege.

He did the same during the first days of convalescence, which he prolonged as much as possible, in order to give the same distinction to the magistrates, come at what time they might, and privately to the great people of the Court and the ambassadors. He fancied himself a tribune of the people, and aspired to their favour and their dangerous power. From this he turned to other affectations which had the same aim against M. le Duc d'Orléans. He multiplied the *Te Deums* that he induced the various ranks of petty officers of the King to have sung on different days and in different churches; he attended all, took with him

as many people as he could, and for six weeks continued this game. A *Te Deum* was sung in every church in Paris. He spoke of nothing else, and above the real joy he felt at the King's recovery, he put on a false one which had a party smell about it, and which avowed designs not to be mistaken.

The King went in state to Nôtre Dame and Saint Géneviève to thank God. These mummeries, thus prolonged, extended to the end of August and the fête Saint-Louis. Each year there is on that day a concert in the garden. The Maréchal de Villeroy took care that on this occasion, the concert should become a species of fête, to which he added a display of fireworks. Less than this would have been enough to draw the crowd. It was so great that a pin could not have fallen to the ground through the mass of people wedged against each other in the garden. The windows of the Tuileries were ornamented, and were filled with people. All the roofs of the Carrousel, as well as the Place, were covered with spectators.

The Maréchal de Villeroy was in his element, and importuned the King, who tried to hide himself in the corners at every moment. The Maréchal took him by the arm, and led him, now to the windows where he could see the Carrousel, and the houses covered with people; now to those which looked upon the garden, full of the innumerable crowd waiting for the fête. Everybody cried *Vive la Roi!* when he appeared, but had not the Maréchal detained him, he would have run away and hid himself.

"Look, my master," the Maréchal would say, "all that crowd, all these people are yours, all belong to

you; you are the master of them: look at them a little therefore, to please them, for they are all yours, they are all devoted to you."

A nice lesson this for a governor to give to a young King, repeating it every time he leads him to the windows, so fearful is he lest the boy-sovereign shall forget it! I do not know whether he received similar lessons from those who had the charge of his education. At last the Maréchal led him upon the terrace, where, beneath a daïs, he heard the end of the concert, and afterwards saw the fireworks. The lesson of the Maréchal de Villeroy, so often and so publicly repeated, made much stir, and threw but little honour upon him. He himself experienced the first effect of his fine instruction.

M. le Duc d'Orléans conducted himself in a manner so simple, so prudent, that he infinitely gained by it. His cares and his reasonable anxiety were measured; there was much reserve in his conversation, an exact and sustained attention in his language, and in his countenance, which allowed nothing to escape him, and which showed as little as possible that he was the successor to the crown; above all, he never gave cause for people to believe that he thought the King's illness more or less serious than it was, or that his hopes were stronger than his fears.

He could not but feel that in a conjuncture so critical, all eyes were fixed upon him, and as in truth he never wished for the crown (however unlikely the statement may seem), he had no need to constrain himself in any way, but simply to be measured in his bearing. His conduct was, in fact, much remarked, and the cabal

opposed to him entirely reduced to silence. Nobody spoke to him upon the event that might happen, not even his most familiar friends and acquaintances, myself included; and at this he was much pleased. He acted entirely upon the suggestions of his own good sense.

This was not the first time, let me add, that the Maréchal de Villeroy, in his capacity of governor of the King, had tacitly insulted M. le Duc d'Orléans. He always, in fact, affected, in the discharge of his duties, a degree of care, vigilance, and scrutiny, the object of which was evident. He was particularly watchful of the food of the King, taking it up with his own hands, and making a great show of this precaution; as though the King could not have been poisoned a thousand times over in spite of such ridiculous care. 'Twas because M. le Duc d'Orléans was vexed with this childish behaviour, so calculated to do him great injury, that he wished me to supersede the Maréchal de Villeroy as governor of the King. This, as before said, I would never consent to. As for the Maréchal, his absurdities met with their just reward, but at a date I have not yet come to.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Projected Marriages of the King and of the Daughter of the Duc d'Orléans—How it was Communicated to Me—I Ask for the Embassy to Spain—It is Granted to Me—Jealousy of Dubois—His Petty Interference—Announcement of the Marriages.

BEFORE this illness of the King, that is to say, at the commencement of June, I went one day to work with M. le Duc d'Orléans, and found him alone, walking up and down the grand apartment.

"Holloa! there," said he, as soon as he saw me; then, taking me by the hand, "I cannot leave you in ignorance of a thing which I desire above all others, which is of the utmost importance to me, and which will cause you as much joy as me; but you must keep it profoundly secret." Then bursting out laughing, "If M. de Cambrai knew that I had told it to you, he would never pardon me." And he proceeded to state that perfect reconciliation had been established between himself and the King and Queen of Spain; that arrangements had been made by which our young King was to marry the Infanta of Spain, as soon as he should be old enough; and the Prince of the Asturias (the heir to the Spanish throne) was to marry Mademoiselle de Chartres, the Regent's daughter.

If my joy at this was great, my astonishment was even greater; M. le Duc d'Orléans embraced me, and the first surprise over, I asked him how he had contrived to bring about these marriages; above all, that of his daughter. He replied that it had all been done in a trice by the Abbé Dubois, who was a regular devil when once he had set his mind upon anything; that the King of Spain had been transported at the idea of the King of France marrying the Infanta; and that the marriage of the Prince of the Asturias had been the *sine quâ non* of the other.

After we had well talked over the matter and rejoiced thereon, I said to the Regent that the proposed marriage of his daughter must be kept profoundly secret until the moment of her departure for Spain; and that of the King also, until the time for their execution arrived; so as to prevent the jealousy of all Europe. At this union, so grand and so intimate, of the two branches of the royal family, such a union having always been the terror of Europe and disunion the object of all its policy—this policy having only too well succeeded—I urged that the sovereigns must be left as long as possible in the confidence they had acquired, the Infanta above all, being but three years old (she was born at Madrid on the morning of the 30th of March, 1718), by which means the fears of Europe upon the marriage of Mademoiselle de Chartres with the Prince of the Asturias would be coloured—the Prince could wait, he having been born in August, 1707, and being accordingly only fourteen years of age. "You are quite right," replied M. le Duc d'Orléans, "but this can't be, because in Spain they

wish to make public the declarations of marriage at once, indeed, as soon as the demand is made and the declaration can be signed."

"What madness!" cried I; "what end can this tocsin have except to arouse all Europe and put it in movement! They must be made to understand this, and we must stick to it; nothing is so important."

"All this is true," said M. le Duc d'Orléans. "I think exactly like you, but they are obstinate in Spain; they have wished matters to be arranged thus, and their wishes have been agreed to. Everything is arranged, fixed, finished. I am so much interested in the matter that you surely would not have advised me to break off for this condition."

I said of course not, shrugging my shoulders at this unseasonable impatience.

During the discussion which followed, I did not forget to think of myself, the occasion being so opportune for making the fortunes of my second son. I remembered then, that as matters were advanced to this point, a special ambassador must be sent to Spain, to ask the hand of the Infanta for the King, and to sign the compact of marriage; that the ambassador must be a nobleman of mark and title, and thus I begged the Duke to give me this commission, with a recommendation to the King of Spain, so as to make my second son, the Marquis of Ruffec, grandee of Spain.

M. le Duc d'Orléans scarcely allowed me to finish, immediately accorded me what I had asked, promised me the recommendation with many expressions of friendship, and asked me to keep the whole matter secret, and make no preparation that would disclose it.

I knew well enough why he enjoined me to secrecy. He wished to have the time to make Dubois swallow this pill. My thanks expressed, I asked him two favours; first, not to pay me as an ambassador, but to give me a round sum sufficient to provide for all my expenses without ruining myself; second, not to entrust any business to me which might necessitate a long stay in Spain, inasmuch as I did not wish to quit him, and wanted to go to Spain simply for the purpose of obtaining the honour above alluded to for my second son. The fact is, I feared that Dubois, not being able to hinder my embassy, might keep me in Spain in a sort of exile, under pretence of business, in order to get rid of me altogether. Events proved that my precaution was not altogether useless.

M. le Duc d'Orléans accorded both the favours I asked, with many obliging remarks, and a hope that my absence would not be long. I thought I had then done great things for my family, and went home much pleased. But, mon Dieu! what are the projects and the successes of men!

Dubois, as I expected, was vexed beyond measure at my embassy, and resolved to ruin me and throw me into disgrace. I was prepared for this, and I soon saw it was so. At first, I received from him nothing but professions of friendship and of attachment for me, congratulations that M. le Duc d'Orléans had accorded to me an embassy my merit deserved, and which would be productive of such useful results for my children. He took care, however, in the midst of these fine phrases, to introduce not one word upon my arrangements, so that he might be able to drive me into

a corner at the last moment, and cause me all the inconvenience possible. He slipped through my hands like an eel until the moment for my departure drew near. As he saw it approach, he began to preach to me of magnificence, and wished to enter into details respecting my suite. I described it to him, and everybody else would have been satisfied, but as his design was to ruin me, he cried out against it, and augmented it by a third. I represented to him the excessive expense this augmentation would cause, the state of the finances, the loss upon the exchange: his sole reply was that the dignity of the King necessitated this expense and show; and that his Majesty would bear the charge. I spoke to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who listened to me with attention, but being persuaded by the Cardinal, held the same language.

This point settled, the Cardinal must needs know how many coats I should take, and how many I should give to my sons:—in a word, there was not a single detail of table or stable that he did not enter into, and that he did not double. My friends exhorted me not to be obstinate with a man so impetuous, so dangerous, so completely in possession of M. le Duc d'Orléans, pointing out to me that when once I was away he might profit by my absence, and that, meanwhile, everything relating to my embassy must pass through his hands. All this was only too true. I was obliged, therefore, to yield, although I felt that, once embarked, the King's purse would be spared at the expense of mine.

As soon as the marriages were declared, I asked to be declared as ambassador, so that I might openly make my preparations, which, it will be remembered, I had

been forbidden to do. Now that there was no secret about the marriages, I fancied there need be no secret as to the ambassador by whom they were to be conducted. I was deceived. Whatever I might allege, the prohibition remained. The Cardinal wished to put me to double the necessary expense, by compelling me to have my liveries, dresses, etc., made in the utmost precipitation; and this happened. He thought, too, I should not be able to provide myself with everything in time; and that he might represent this to M. le Duc d'Orléans, and in Spain, as a fault, and excite envious cries against me.

Nevertheless, I did not choose to press him to announce my embassy, at the same time trying to obtain from him the instructions I was to receive, and which, passing through him and the Regent alone, told nothing to the public, as my preparations would have done. But I could not obtain them. Dubois carelessly replied to me, that in one or two conversations the matter would be exhausted. He wished me to know nothing, except vaguely; to leave no time for reflection, for questions, for explanations; and to throw me thus into embarrassments, and to cause me to commit blunders which he intended to make the most of. At last, tired of so many and such dangerous postponements, I went on Tuesday, the 23rd of September, to M. le Duc d'Orléans, arranging my visit so that it took place when he was in his apartments at the Tuileries; there I spoke with such effect, that he said I had only to show myself to the King. He led me to his Majesty at once, and there and then my embassy was announced. Upon leaving the King's cabinet, M. le

Duc d'Orléans made me jump into his coach, which was waiting for him, and took me to the Palais Royal, where we began to speak seriously upon the affairs of my embassy.

I fancy that Cardinal Dubois was much annoyed at what had been done, and that he would have liked to postpone the declaration yet a little longer. But this now was impossible. The next day people were sent to work upon my equipments, the Cardinal showing as much eagerness and impatience respecting them, as he had before shown apathy and indifference. He urged on the workmen; must needs see each livery and each coat as it was finished; increased the magnificence of each; and had all my coats and those of my children sent to him. At last, the hurry to make me set out was so great, that such of the things as were ready he sent on by rapid conveyance to Bayonne, at a cost by no means trifling to me.

The Cardinal next examined the list of persons I intended to have with me, and approved it. To my extreme surprise he said, however, that I must add forty officers of cavalry and infantry, from the regiments of my sons. I cried out against the madness and the expense of such a numerous military accompaniment. I represented that it was not usual for ambassadors, with a peaceful mission, to take with them such an imposing force by way of escort; I showed that these officers, being necessarily gay men, might be led away into indiscreet gallantries, which would give me more trouble than all the business of my embassy. Nothing could be more evident, true, and reasonable than my representations, nothing more useless or worse received.

The Cardinal had resolved to ruin me, and to leave me in Spain with all the embarrassments, business, and annoyances he could. He rightly thought that nothing was more likely to make him succeed than to charge me with forty officers. Not finding them, I took only twenty-nine, and if the Cardinal succeeded as far as concerned my purse, I was so fortunate, and these gentlemen were so discreet, that he succeeded in no other way.

Let me add here, before I give the details of my journey to Spain, in what manner the announcement of these two marriages were received by the King and the public.

His Majesty was by no means gratified when he heard that a wife had been provided for him. At the first mention of marriage he burst out crying. The Regent, M. le Duc, and M. de Fréjus, had all the trouble in the world to extract a "yes" from him, and to induce him to attend the Regency Council, in which it was necessary that he should announce his consent to the proposed union, or be present while it was announced for him. The council was held, and the King came to it, his eyes swollen and red, and his look very serious.

Some moments of silence passed, during which M. le Duc d'Orléans threw his eyes over all the company (who appeared deeply expectant), and then fixed them on the King, and asked if he might announce to the council the marriage of his Majesty. The King replied by a dry "yes," and in a rather low tone, but which was heard by the four or five people on each side of him, and the Regent immediately announced the

marriage. Then, after taking the opinions of the council, which were for the most part favorable, he turned towards the King with a smiling air, as though inviting him to assume the same, and said, "There, then, Sire, your marriage is approved and passed, and a grand and fortunate matter finished." The council then broke up.

The news of what had taken place immediately ran over all Paris. The Tuileries and the Palais Royal were soon filled with people who came to present themselves before the King to compliment him and the Regent on the conclusion of this grand marriage, and the crowd continued the following days. The King had much difficulty in assuming some little gaiety the first day, but on the morrow he was less sombre, and by degrees he quite recovered himself.

M. le Duc d'Orléans took care not to announce the marriage of his daughter with the Prince of the Asturias at the same time that the other marriage was announced. He declared it, however, the next day, and the news was received with the utmost internal vexation by the cabal opposed to him. Men, women, people of all conditions who belonged to that cabal, lost all countenance. It was a pleasure to me, I admit, to look upon them. They were utterly disconcerted. Nevertheless, after the first few days of overthrow, they regained courage, and set to work in order to break off both the marriages.

CHAPTER XIX.

Interview with Dubois—His Singular Instructions to Me—His Insidious Object—Various Tricks and Manœuvres—My Departure for Spain—Journey by Way of Bordeaux and Bayonne—Reception in Spain—Arrival at Madrid.

I HAVE already said that Dubois looked most unfavorably upon my embassy to Spain, and that I saw he was determined to do all in his power to throw obstacles in its way. I had fresh proofs of this. First, before my departure: when he gave me my written instructions, he told me that in Spain I must take precedence of everybody during the signing of the King's contract of marriage, and at the chapel, at the two ceremonies of the marriage of the Prince of the Asturias, allowing no one to be before me!

I represented to him that the Pope's nuncio would be present, and that to him the ambassadors of France gave place everywhere, and even the ambassadors of the Emperor also, who, without opposition, preceded those of the King. He replied that that was true, except in special cases like the present, and that his instructions must be obeyed. My surprise was great at so strange an order. I tried to move him by appealing to his pride; asking him how I should manage with a cardinal, if one happened to be present, and with

the majordomo-major, who corresponds, but in a very superior degree, with our grand master of France. He flew in a rage, and declared that I must precede the majordomo-major also; that there would be no difficulty in doing so; and that, as to the cardinals, I should find none. I shrugged my shoulders and begged him to think of the matter. Instead of replying to me, he said he had forgotten to acquaint me with a most essential particular: it was, that I must take care not to visit anybody until I had been first visited.

I replied that the visiting question had not been forgotten in my instructions, and that those instructions were to the effect that I should act in this respect as the Duc de Saint-Aignan had acted, and that the usage he had followed was to pay the first visit to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and to the Councillors of State (when there were any), who are the same as are known here under the name of ministers. Thereupon he broke out afresh, prated, talked about the dignity of the King, and did not allow me the opportunity of saying another word. I abridged my visit, therefore, and went away.

However strange might appear to me these verbal orders of such a new kind, I thought it best to speak to the Duc de Saint-Aignan and Amelot on the subject, so as to convince myself of their novelty. Both these ambassadors, as well as those who had preceded them, had visited in an exactly opposite manner; and they thought it extravagant that I should precede the nuncio, no matter where. Amelot told me, moreover, that I should suffer all sorts of annoyances, and succeed in nothing, if I refused the first visit to the

Minister of Foreign Affairs; that as for the Councillors of State, they existed only in name, the office having fallen into desuetude; and that I must pay other visits to certain officers he named (three in number), who would be justly offended and piqued if I refused them what every one who had preceded me had rendered them. He added that I had better take good care to do so, unless I wished to remain alone in my house, and have the cold shoulder turned upon me by every principal person of the Court.

By this explanation of Amelot I easily comprehended the reason of these singular verbal orders. The Cardinal wished to secure my failure in Spain, and my disgrace in France: in Spain by making me offend at the outset all the greatest people and the minister through whose hands all my business would pass; draw upon myself thus complaints here, which, as I had no written orders to justify my conduct, he (Dubois) would completely admit the justice of, and then disavow me, declaring he had given me exactly opposite orders. If I did not execute what he had told me, I felt that he would accuse me of sacrificing the King's honour and the dignity of the Crown, in order to please in Spain, and obtain thus honours for myself and my sons, and that he would prohibit the latter to accept them. There would have been less uproar respecting the nuncio; but if I preceded him, Dubois felt persuaded that the Court of Rome would demand justice; and this justice in his hands would have been a shameful recall.

My position appeared so difficult, that I resolved to leave nothing undone in order to change it. I thought

M. le Duc d'Orléans would not resist the evidence I should bring forward, in order to show the extraordinary nature of Dubois' verbal instructions. I deceived myself. It was in vain that I spoke to M. le Duc d'Orléans. I found nothing but feebleness under the yoke of a master; by which I judged how much I could hope for during my absence. Several times I argued with him and the Cardinal; but in vain. They both declared that if preceding ambassadors had paid the first visits, that was no example for me, in an embassy so solemn and distinguished as that I was about to execute. I represented that, however solemn and however distinguished might be my embassy, it gave me no rank superior to that of extraordinary ambassadors, and that I could claim none. Useless! useless! To my arguments there was no reply, but obstinacy prevailed; and I clearly saw the extreme malignity of the valet, and the unspeakable weakness of the master. It was for me to manage as I could.

The Cardinal now began ardently to press my departure; and, in fact, there was no more time to lose. He unceasingly hurried on the workmen who were making all that I required,—vexed, perhaps, that being in such prodigious number, he could not augment them. There was nothing more for him to do but to give me the letters with which I was to be charged. He delayed writing them until the last moment previous to my departure, that is to say, the very evening before I started; the reason will soon be seen. The letters were for their Catholic Majesties, for the Queen Dowager at Bayonne, and for the Prince of the

Asturias; letters from the King and from the Duc d'Orléans. But before giving them to me, the Regent said he would write two letters to the Prince of the Asturias, both alike, except in this respect, that in the one he would address the Prince as "nephew," and in the other as "brother and nephew," and that I was to try and deliver the latter, which he passionately wished; but that if I found too much difficulty in doing so, I must not persevere but deliver the former instead.

I had reason to believe that here was another plot of Dubois, to cause me trouble by embroiling me with M. le Duc d'Orléans. The Regent was the last man in the world to care for these formalities. The Prince of the Asturias was son of the King and heir to the Crown, and, in consequence, of the rank of a son of France. In whatever way regarded, M. le Duc d'Orléans was extremely inferior in rank to him; and it was something new and adventurous to treat him on terms of equality. This, however, is what I was charged with, and I believe, in the firm hope of Cardinal Dubois that I should fail, and that he might profit by my failure.

Finally, on the morning of the day before my departure, all the papers with which I was to be charged were brought to me. I will not give the list of them. But among these letters there was none from the King to the Infanta! I thought they had forgotten to put it with the others. I said so to the persons who brought them to me. What was my surprise when they told me that the letter was not written, but that I should have it in the course of the day!

This appeared so strange to me, that my mind was

filled with suspicion. I spoke of the letter to the Cardinal and to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who assured me that I should have it in the evening. At midnight it had not arrived. I wrote to the Cardinal. Finally I set out without it. He wrote to me, saying I should receive it before arriving at Bayonne; but nothing less. I wrote him anew. He replied to me, saying that I should have it before I arrived at Madrid. A letter from the King to the Infanta was not difficult to write; I could not doubt, therefore, that there was some design in this delay. Whatever it might be, I could not understand it, unless the intention was to send the letter afterwards, and make me pass for a heedless fellow who had lost the first.

Dubois served me another most impudent turn, seven or eight days before my departure. He sent word to me, by his two devoted slaves, Le Blanc and Belleisle, that as he had the foreign affairs under his charge, he must have the post, which he would not and could not any longer do without; that he knew I was the intimate friend of Torcy (who had the post in his department), whose resignation he desired; that he begged me to write to Torcy, and send my letter to him by an express courier to Sablé (where he had gone on an excursion); that he should see by my conduct on this occasion, and its success, in what manner he could count upon me, and that he should act towards me accordingly. To this his two slaves added all they could to persuade me to comply, assuring me that Dubois would break off my embassy if I did not do as he wished. I did not for a moment doubt, after what I had seen of the inconceivable feebleness of M.

le Duc d'Orléans, that Dubois was really capable of thus affronting and thwarting me, or that I should have no aid from the Regent. At the same time I resolved to run all hazards rather than lend myself to an act of violence against a friend, so sure, so sage, and so virtuous, and who had served the state with such reputation, and deserved so well of it.

I replied therefore to these gentlemen that I thought the commission very strange, and much more so their reasoning of it; that Torcy was not a man from whom an office of this importance could be taken unless he wished to give it up; that all I could do was to ask him if he wished to resign, and if so, on what conditions; that as to exhorting him to resign, I could do nothing of the kind, although I was not ignorant of what this refusal might cost me and my embassy. They tried in vain to reason with me; all they could obtain was this firm resolution.

Castries and his brother, the Archbishop, were intimate friends of Torcy and of myself. I sent for them to come to me in the midst of the tumult of my departure. They immediately came, and I related to them what had just happened. They were more indignant at the manner and the moment, than at the thing itself; for Torcy knew that sooner or later the Cardinal would strip him of the post for his own benefit. They extremely praised my reply, exhorted me to send word to Torcy, who was on the point of departing from Sablé, or had departed, and who would make his own terms with M. le Duc dOrléans much more advantageously, present, than absent. I read to them the letter I had written to Torcy, while waiting for them, which they much approved, and which I at once despatched.

Torcy of himself had hastened his return. My courier found him with his wife in the Parc of Versailles, having passed by the Chartres route. He read my letter, charged the courier with many compliments for me (his wife did likewise), and told him to say he would see me the next day. I informed M. Castries of his arrival. We all four met the next day. Torcy warmly appreciated my conduct, and, to his death, we lived on terms of the greatest intimacy, as may be imagined when I say that he committed to me his memoirs (these he did not write until long after the death of M. le Duc d'Orléans), with which I have connected mine. He did not seem to care for the post, if assured of an honourable pension.

I announced then his return to Dubois, saying it would be for him and M. le Duc d'Orléans to make their own terms with him, and get out of the matter in this way. Dubois, content at seeing by this that Torcy consented to resign the post, cared not how, so that the latter made his own arrangements, and all passed off with the best grace on both sides. Torcy had some money and 60,000 livres pension during life, and 20,000 for his wife after him. This was arranged before my departure and was very well carried out afterwards.

A little while after the declaration of the marriage, the Duchesse de Ventadour and Madame de Soubise, her granddaughter, had been named, the one governess of the Infanta, the other successor to the office; and they were both to go and meet her at the frontier, and bring her to Paris to the Louvre, where she was to be lodged a little while after the declaration of my em-

bassy: the Prince de Rohan, her son-in-law, had orders to go and make the exchange of the Princesses upon the frontier, with the people sent by the King of Spain to perform the same function. I had never had any intimacy with them, though we were not on bad terms. But these Spanish commissions caused us to visit each other with proper politeness. I forgot to say so earlier and in the proper place.

At last, viz., on the 23rd of October, 1721, I set out, having with me the Comte de Lorge, my children, the Abbé de Saint-Simon, and his brother, and many others. The rest of the company joined me at Blaye. We slept at Orléans, at Montrichard, and at Poictiers. On arriving at Conté my berline broke down. This caused a delay of three hours, and I did not arrive at Ruffec until nearly midnight. Many noblemen of the neighbourhood were waiting for me there, and I entertained them at dinner and supper during the two days I stayed. I experienced real pleasure in embracing Puy-Robert, who was lieutenant-colonel of the Royal Roussillon Regiment when I was captain.

From Ruffec I went in two days to La Cassine, a small house at four leagues from Blaye, which my father had built on the borders of his marshes of Blaye, and which I felt much pleasure in visiting; I stopped there during All Saints' Day and the evening before, and the next day I early betook myself to Blaye again, where I sojourned two days. I found several persons of quality there, many of the nobility of the country and of the adjoining provinces, and Boucher, Intendant of Bordeaux, brother-in-law of Le Blanc, who was waiting for me, and whom I enter-

tained with good cheer morning and evening during this short stay.

We crossed to Bordeaux in the midst of such bad weather that everybody pressed me to delay the trip; but I had so few days at my command that I did not accede to their representations. Boucher had brought his brigantine magnificently equipped, and boats enough to carry over all my company, most of whom went with us. The view of the port and the town of Bordeaux surprised me, with more than three hundred ships of all nations ranged in two lines upon my passage, decked out in all their finery, and with a great noise from their cannons and those of the Château Trompette.

Bordeaux is too well known to need description at my hands: I will simply say that after Constantinople it presents the finest view of any other port. Upon landing we received many compliments, and found many carriages, which conducted us to the Intendant's house, where the Jurats came to compliment me in state dress. I invited them to supper with me, a politeness they did not expect, and which they appeared to highly appreciate. I insisted upon going to see the Hôtel de Ville, which is amazingly ugly, saying to the Jurats that it was not to satisfy my curiosity, but in order to pay a visit to them, that I went. This extremely pleased.

After thanking M. and Madame Boucher for their attention, we set out again, traversed the great Landes, and reached in due time Bayonne. The day after my arrrival there, I had an audience with the Queen Dowager of Spain. I was astonished upon arriving

at her house. It had only two windows in front, looked upon a little court, and had but trifling depth. The room I entered was very plainly furnished. I found the Queen, who was waiting for me, accompanied by the Duchesse de Linorez and very few other persons. I complimented her in the name of the King, and presented to her his letter. Nothing could be more polite than her bearing towards me.

Passing the Pyrenees, I quitted with France, rain and bad weather, and found a clear sky, a charming temperature, with views and perspectives which changed at each moment, and which were not less charming. We were all mounted upon mules, the pace of which is good but easy. I turned a little out of my way to visit Loyola, famous by the birth of Saint Ignatius, and situated all alone in a narrow valley. We found there four or five Jesuits, very polite and instructed, who took care of the prodigious building erected there for more than a hundred Jesuits and numberless scholars. A church was there nearly finished, of rotunda shape, of a grandeur and size which surprised me. Gold, painting, sculpture, the richest ornaments of all kinds, are distributed everywhere with prodigality but taste. The architecture is correct and admirable, the marble is most exquisite; jasper, porphyry, lapis, polished, wreathed, and fluted columns, with their capitals and their ornaments of gilded bronze, a row of balconies between each altar with little steps of marble to ascend them, and the cage encrusted; the altars and that which accompanied them admirable. In a word, the church was one of the most superb edifices in Europe, the best kept up, and the

most magnificently adorned. We took there the best chocolate I ever tasted, and, after some hours of curiosity and admiration, we regained our road.

On the 15th, we arrived at Vittoria, where I found a deputation of the province, whom I invited to supper, and the next day to breakfast. They spoke French and I was surprised to see Spaniards so gay and such good company at table. Joy on account of my journey burst out in every place through which I passed in France and Spain, and obtained for me a good reception. At Salinas, among other towns which I passed through without stopping, ladies, who, to judge by their houses and by themselves, appeared to me to be quality folks, asked me with such good grace to let them see the man who was bringing happiness to Spain, that I thought it would only be proper gallantry to enter their dwellings. They appeared ravished, and I had all the trouble in the world to get rid of them, and to continue my road.

I arrived on the 18th at Burgos, where I meant to stay at least one day, to see what turn would take a rather strong fever which had seized my eldest son; but I was so pressed to hasten on that I was obliged to leave my son behind with nearly all his attendants.

I left Burgos therefore on the 19th. We found but few relays, and those ill-established. We travelled night and day without going to bed, until we reached Madrid, using such vehicles as we could obtain. I performed the last twelve leagues on a post-horse, which cost twice as much as in France. In this manner we arrived in Madrid on Friday, the 21st, at eleven o'clock at night.

We found at the entrance of the town (which has neither gates nor walls, neither barriers nor faubourgs,) people on guard, who asked us who we were, and whence we came. They had been placed there expressly so as to know the moment of my arrival. As I was much fatigued by travelling incessantly from Burgos without stopping, I replied that we were the people of the Ambassador of France, who would arrive the next day.

I learnt afterwards, that the minister had calculated that I could not reach Madrid before the 22d.

CHAPTER XX.

Interview in the Hall of Mirrors—Preliminaries of the Marriages—Grimaldo—How the Question of Precedence was Settled—I Ask for an Audience—Splendid Illuminations—A Ball—I am Forced to Dance.

EARLY the next morning I received a visit from Grimaldo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, who, overjoyed at my arrival, had announced it to their Catholic Majesties before coming to me. Upon his example, apparently, the three other ministers, whom, according to usage, I ought to have visited first, came also; so that one infamous difficulty which Cardinal Dubois had placed in my path was happily overcome without effort on my part.

Grimaldo at once conducted me to the palace, and introduced me to the King. I made a profound reverence to him; he testified to me his joy at my arrival, and asked me for news of the King, of M. le Duc d'Orléans, of my journey, and of my eldest son, whom, as he knew, I had left behind at Burgos. He then entered alone into the Cabinet of the Mirrors. I was instantly surrounded by all the Court with compliments and indications of joy at the marriages and union of the crowns. Nearly all the seigneurs spoke

French, and I had great difficulty in replying to their numberless compliments.

A half quarter of an hour after the King had entered his cabinet, he sent for me. I entered alone into the Hall of Mirrors, which is very vast, but much less wide than long. The King, with the Queen on his left, was nearly at the bottom of the salon,—both their Majesties standing and touching each other. I approached with three profound reverences, and I will remark, once for all, that the King never covers himself except at public audiences, and when he goes to and comes from his mass. The audience lasted half an hour, and was principally occupied, on the part of the King and Queen, with compliments and expressions of joy at the marriages that were to take place. At its close, the Queen asked me if I would like to see the children, and conducted me to them.

I never saw prettier boys than Don Carlos and Don Ferdinand, nor a prettier babe than Don Philip. The King and Queen took pleasure in making me look at them, and in making them turn and walk before me with very good grace. Their Majesties entered afterwards into the Infanta's chamber, where I tried to exhibit as much gallantry as possible. In fact, the Infanta was charming—like a little woman—and not at all embarrassed. The Queen said to me that she already had begun to learn French, and the King that she would soon forget Spain.

"Oh!" cried the Queen, "not only Spain, but the King and me, so as to attach herself to the King, her husband, alone." Upon this I tried not to remain dumb, and to say what was appropriate. Their Majes-

ties dismissed me with much goodness, and I was again encircled by the crowd with many compliments.

A few moments after the King recalled me, in order to see the Prince of the Asturias, who was with their Majesties in the same Hall of Mirrors. I found him tall, and really made to be painted; fine light-brown hair, light fresh-coloured complexion, long face, but agreeable; good eyes, but too near the nose. I found in him also much grace and politeness. He particularly asked after the King, M. le Duc d'Orléans, and Mademoiselle de Montpensier, to whom he was to be betrothed.

Their Catholic Majesties testified much satisfaction to me at the diligence I had used; said that a single day would be sufficient for the ceremonies that had to be gone through (demanding the hand of the Infanta, according it, and signing the marriage contract). Afterwards they asked me when all would be ready. I replied it would be any day they pleased; because, as they wished to go into the country, I thought it would be best to throw no delay in their path. They appeared much pleased at this reply, but would not fix the day, upon which I proposed the following Tuesday. Overjoyed at this promptness, they fixed the Thursday for their departure, and left me with the best possible grace.

I had got over one difficulty, as I have shown, that connected with the first visits, but I had others yet to grapple with. And first, there was my embarrassment at finding no letter for the Infanta. I confided this fact to Grimaldo, who burst out laughing,

was to have my first audience with the Infanta the next day, and it was then that the letter ought to be produced. Grimaldo said he would arrange so that when I went, the governess should come into the ante-chamber, and say that the Infanta was asleep, and upon offering to awake her, I should refuse to allow her, take my leave, and wait until the letter from the King arrived before I visited her again. Everything happened just as it had been planned, and thus the second obstacle which the crafty and malicious Cardinal had put in my path, for the sake of overturning me, was quietly got over. Grimaldo's kindness encouraged me to open my heart under its influence. I found that the Spanish minister knew, quite as well as I did, what manner of person Dubois was.

On Sunday, the 23rd, I had in the morning my first private audience of the King and Queen, together, in the Hall of Mirrors, which is the place where they usually give it. I was accompanied by Maulevrier, our ambassador. I presented to their Catholic Majesties the Comte de Lorge, the Comte de Céreste, my second son, and the Abbé de Saint-Simon and his brother. I received many marks of goodness from the Queen in this audience.

On Tuesday, the 25th of November, I had my solemn audience. I went to the palace in a magnificent coach, belonging to the King, drawn by eight grey horses, admirably dappled. There were no postilions, and the coachman drove me, his hat under his arm. Five of my coaches filled with my suite followed, and about twenty others (belonging to noblemen of the Court, and sent by them in order to do me honour),

with gentlemen in each. The King's coach was surrounded by my musicians, liveried servants on foot, and by officers of my household. On arriving at the open place in front of the palace, I thought myself at the Tuileries. The regiments of Spanish guards, clad, officers and soldiers, like the French guards, and the regiment of the Walloon guards, clad, officers and soldiers, like the Swiss guards, were under arms; the flags waved, the drums beat, and the officers saluted with the half-pike. On the way, the streets were filled with people, the shops with dealers and artisans, all the windows were crowded. Joy showed itself on every face, and we heard nothing but benedictions.

The audience passed off admirably. I asked the hand of the Infanta in marriage on the part of the King; my request was graciously complied with, compliments passed on both sides, and I returned to my house, well pleased with the reception I had met with from both their Catholic Majesties.

There was still the marriage contract to be signed, and this was to take place in the afternoon. Here was to be my great trial, for the majordomo-major and the nuncio of the Pope were to be present at the ceremony, and, according to the infamous and extraordinary instructions I had received from Dubois, I was to precede them! How was this to be done? I had to bring all my ingenuity to bear upon the subject in order to determine. In the embarrassment I felt upon this position, I was careful to affect the most marked attention to the nuncio and the majordomo-major every time I met them and visited them, so as to take from them all idea that I wished to precede them, when I should in reality do so.

The place the majordomo-major was to occupy at this ceremony was behind the King's arm-chair, a little to the right, so as to allow room for the captain of the guards on duty; to put myself there would be to take his place, and push the captain of the guards away, and those near him. The place of the nuncio was at the side of the King, his face to the arm-chair; to take it would have been to push him beyond the arm of the chair, which assuredly he would no more have submitted to than the majordomo-major on the other side. I resolved, therefore, to hazard a middle term; to try and introduce myself at the top of the right arm of the chair, a little sideways, so as to take the place of neither, entirely; but, nevertheless, to drive them out, and to cover this with an air of ignorance and of simplicity; and, at the same time, of eagerness, of joy, of curiosity, of courtier-like desire to speak to the King as much as possible: and all this I exactly executed, in appearance stupidly, and in reality very successfully!

When the time for the audience arrived, I took up my position, accordingly, in the manner I have indicated. The majordomo-major and the nuncio entered, and finding me thus placed, and speaking to the King, appeared much surprised. I heard *Signor* and *Señor* repeated right and left of me, and addressed to me—for both expressed themselves with difficulty in French—and I replied with bows to one and to the other with the smiling air of a man entirely absorbed in joy at his functions, and who understands nothing of what is meant; then I recommenced my conversation with the King, with a sort of liberty and

enthusiasm, so that the nuncio and majordomo-major soon grew tired of appealing to a man whose spirit was so transported that he no longer knew where he was, or what was said to him. In this manner I defeated the craft, cunning, and maliciousness of Dubois. At the conclusion of the ceremony, I accompanied the King and Queen to the door of the Hall of Mirrors, taking good care then to show every deference to the majordomo-major and the nuncio, and yielding place to them, in order to remove any impression from their minds that I had just acted in a contrary manner from design.

As soon as their Catholic Majesties had departed, and the door of the salon was closed upon them, I was encircled and, so to speak, almost stifled by the company present, who, one after the other, pressed upon me with the greatest demonstrations of joy and a thousand compliments.

I returned home after the ceremony, which had lasted a long time. While I occupied my stolen position I was obliged, in order to maintain it, to keep up an incessant conversation with the King, and at last, no longer knowing what to talk about, I asked him for an audience the next day, which he readily accorded me. But this direct request was contrary to the usage of the Court, where the ambassadors, the other foreign ministers, and the subjects of the country of whatever rank, address their requests to an officer who is appointed to receive them, who communicates with the King, and names the day and the hour when his Majesty will grant the interview.

Grimaldo, a little after the end of ceremony, had

gone to work with the King and Queen, as was customary. I was surprised, an hour after returning home, to receive a letter from this minister, asking me if I had anything to say to the King I did not wish the Queen to hear, referring to the audience I had asked of the King for the morrow, and begging me to tell him what it was for. I replied to him instantly, that having found the opportunity good I had asked for this audience; but if I had not mentioned the Queen, it was because I had imagined she was so accustomed to be present that there was no necessity to allude to her: but as to the rest, I had my thanks to offer to the King upon what had just passed, and nothing to say to him that I should not wish to say to the Queen, and that I should be very sorry if she were not present.

As I was writing this reply, Don Gaspard Giron invited me to go and see the illuminations of the Place Mayor. I quickly finished my letter; we jumped into a coach, and the principal people of my suite jumped into others. We were conducted by détours to avoid the light of the illuminations in approaching them, and we arrived at a fine house which looks upon the middle of the Place, and which is that where the King and Queen go to see the fêtes that take place. We perceived no light in descending or in ascending the staircase. Everything had been closed, but on entering into the chamber which looks upon the Place, we were dazzled, and immediately we entered the balcony speech failed me, from surprise, for more than seven or eight minutes.

This Place is superficially much vaster than any I

had ever seen in Paris or elsewhere, and of greater length than breadth. The five stories of the houses which surround it are all of the same level; each has windows at equal distance, and of equal size, with balconies as deep as they are long, guarded by iron balustrades, exactly alike in every case. Upon each of these balconies two torches of white wax were placed, one at each end of the balcony, supported upon the balustrade, slightly leaning outwards, and attached to nothing. The light that this gives is incredible; it has a splendour and a majesty about it that astonishes you and impresses you. The smallest type can be read in the middle of the Place, and all about, though the ground-floor is not illuminated.

As soon as I appeared upon the balcony, all the people beneath gathered round and began to cry, *Señor! tauro! tauro!* The people were asking me to obtain for them a bull-fight, which is what they like best in the world, and what the King had not permitted for several years from conscientious principles. Therefore I contented myself the next day with simply telling him of these cries, without asking any questions thereon, while expressing to him my astonishment at an illumination so surprising and so admirable.

Don Gaspard Giron and the Spaniards who were with me in the house from which I saw the illumination, charmed with the astonishment I had displayed at this spectacle, published it abroad with all the more pleasure because they were not accustomed to the admiration of the French, and many noblemen spoke of it to me with great pleasure. Scarcely had I time

to return home and sup after this fine illumination than I was obliged to go to the palace for the ball that the King had prepared there, and which lasted until past two in the morning.

The salon was very vast and splendid; the dresses of the company were sumptuous; the appearance of our finest fancy-dress balls did not approach the appearance of this.

What seemed strange to me was to see three bishops in lawn sleeves and cloaks in the ball-room, remaining, too, all the evening, and to see the accoutrement of the camerara-mayor, who held exposed in her hand a great chaplet, and who, while talking and criticising the ball and the dancers, muttered her prayers, and continued to do so while the ball lasted. What I found very strange was, that none of the men present (except six special officers and Maulevrier and myself) were allowed to sit, not even the dancers; in fact, there was not a single seat in the whole salon, not even at the back, except those I have specified.

In Spain, men and women of all ages wear all sorts of colours, and dance if they like, even when more than sixty years old, without exciting the slightest ridicule or astonishment. I saw several examples of this among men and women.

Amongst the company present was Madame Robecque, a Frenchwoman, one of the Queen's ladies, whom I had known before she went to Spain. In former days we had danced together at the Court. Apparently she said so to the Queen, for after having danced with one of the children, she traversed

the whole length of the salon, made a fine curtsey to their Catholic Majesties, and came to dislodge me from my retreat, asking me with a curtsey and a smile to dance. I replied to her by saying she was laughing at me; dispute, gallantries; finally, she went to the Queen, who called me and told me that the King and she wished me to dance.

I took the liberty to represent to her that she wished to divert herself at my expense; that this order could not be serious; I alleged my age, my position, the number of years since I had danced; in a word, I did all I could to back out. But all was useless. The King mixed himself in the matter; both he and the Queen begged me to comply, tried to persuade me I danced very well; at last commanded me, and in such a manner that I was obliged to obey. I acquitted myself, therefore, as well as I could.

The ball being finished, the Marquis de Villagarcias, one of the majordomos, and one of the most honest and most gracious of men I ever saw (since appointed Viceroy of Peru), would not let me leave until I had rested in the refreshment-room, where he made me drink a glass of excellent neat wine, because I was all in a sweat from the minuets and quadrilles I had gone through, under a very heavy coat.

This same evening and the next I illuminated my house within and without, not having a moment's leisure to give any *fête* in the midst of the many functions I had been so precipitately called upon to fulfil.

CHAPTER XXI.

Mademoiselle de Montpensier sets out for Spain—I Carry the News to the King—Set out for Lerma—Stay at the Escurial —Take the Small-pox—Convalescence.

ON Thursday, the 27th of November, the King and Queen were to depart from Madrid to Lerma, a pretty hamlet six leagues from Burgos, where they had a palace. On the same day, very early in the morning, our ambassador, Maulevrier, came to me with despatches from Cardinal Dubois, announcing that the Regent's daughter, Mademoiselle de Montpensier, had departed on the 18th of November for Spain, and giving information as to the places she would stop at, the people she would be accompanied by, the day she would arrive at the frontier, and the persons charged with the exchange of the Princesses.

Maulevrier and I thought this news so important that we felt there was no time to lose, and at once hastened away to the palace to communicate it to their Majesties, who we knew were waiting for it most impatiently. We arrived at such an early hour that all was deserted in the palace, and when we reached the door of the Hall of Mirrors, we were obliged to knock loudly in order to be heard. A French valet

opened the door, and told us that their Catholic Majesties were still in bed. We did not doubt it, and begged him to apprise them that we wished to have the honour of speaking to them. Such an honour was unheard of, except under extraordinary circumstances; nevertheless the valet quickly returned, saying that their Majesties would receive us, though it was against all rule and usage to do so while they were in bed.

We traversed therefore the long and grand Hall of Mirrors, turned to the left at the end into a large and fine room, then short off to the left again into a very little chamber, portioned off from the other, and lighted by the door and by two little windows at the top of the partition wall. There was a bed of four feet and a half at most, of crimson damask, with gold fringe, four posts, the curtains open at the foot and at the side the King occupied. The King was almost stretched out upon pillows with a little bed-gown of white satin; the Queen sitting upright, a piece of tapestry in her hand, at the left of the King, some skeins of thread near her, papers scattered upon the rest of the bed and upon an arm-chair at the side of it. She was quite close to the King, who was in his night-cap, she also, and in her bed-gown, both between the sheets, which were only very imperfectly hidden by the papers.

They made us abridge our reverences, and the King, raising himself a little impatiently, asked us our business. We were alone, the valet having retired after showing us the door.

"Good news, Sire," replied I. "Mademoiselle de

Montpensier set out on the 18th; the courier has this instant brought us the news, and we have at once come to present ourselves to you and apprise your Majesties of it."

Joy instantly painted itself on their faces, and immediately they began to question us at great length upon the details the courier had brought us. After an animated conversation, in which Maulevrier took but little part, their Catholic Majesties dismissed us, testifying to us the great pleasure we had caused them by not losing a minute in acquainting them with the departure of Mademoiselle de Montpensier, above all in not having been stopped by the hour, and by the fact that they were in bed.

We went back to my house to dine and returned to the palace in order to see the King and Queen depart. I again received from them a thousand marks of favour. Both the King and Queen, but especially the latter, several times insisted that I must not lose any time in following them to Lerma; upon which I assured them they would find me there as they alighted from their coach.

I set out, in fact, on the 2nd of December, from Madrid, to join the Court, and was to sleep at the Escurial, with the Comtes de Lorges and de Céreste, my second son, the Abbé de Saint-Simon and his brother, Pacquet, and two principal officers of the King's troops, who remained with me as long as I stayed in Spain. In addition to the orders of the King of Spain and the letters of the Marquis de Grimaldo, I was also furnished with those of the nuncio for the Prior of the Escurial, who is, at the

same time, governor, in order that I might be shown the marvels of this superb and prodigious monastery, and that everything might be opened for me that I wished to visit; for I had been warned that, without the recommendation of the nuncio, neither that of the King and his minister, nor any official character, would have much served me. It will be seen that, after all, I did not fail to suffer from the churlishness and the superstition of these coarse Jeronimites.

They are black and white monks, whose dress resembles that of the Celestins,—very idle, ignorant, and without austerity, who, by the number of their monasteries and their riches, are in Spain much about what the Benedictines are in France, and like them are a congregation. They elect also, like the Benedictines, their superiors, local and general, except the Prior of the Escurial, who is nominated by the King, remains in office as long as the King likes and no more, and who is yet better lodged at the Escurial than his Catholic Majesty. 'Tis a prodigy, this building, of extent, of structure, of every kind of magnificence, and contains an immense heap of riches, in pictures, in ornaments, in vases of all kinds, in precious stones, everywhere strewn about, and the description of which I will not undertake, since it does not belong to my subject. Suffice it to say that a curious connoisseur of all these different beauties might occupy himself there for three months without cessation, and then would not have examined all. The gridiron (its form, at least) has regulated all the ordonnance of this sumptuous edifice in honour of Saint-Laurent, and of the battle of Saint-Quentin, gained by Philippe II.,

who, seeing the action from a height, vowed he would erect this monastery if his troops obtained the victory, and asked his courtiers, if such were the pleasures of the Emperor, his father, who in fact did not go so far for them as that.

There is not a door, a lock, or utensil of any kind, or a piece of plate, that is not marked with a gridiron.

The distance from Madrid to the Escurial is much about the same as that from Paris to Fontainebleau. The country is very flat and becomes a wilderness on approaching the Escurial, which takes its name from a large village you pass, a league off. It is upon an eminence which you ascend imperceptibly, and upon which you see endless deserts on three sides; but it is backed, as it were, by the mountain of Guadarama, which encircles Madrid on three sides, at a distance of several leagues, more or less. There is no village at the Escurial; the lodging of their Catholic Majesties forms the handle of the gridiron. The principal grand officers, and those most necessary, are lodged, as well as the Queen's ladies, in the monastery; on the side by which you arrive all is very badly built.

The church, the grand staircase, and the grand cloister, surprised me. I admired the elegance of the surgery, and the pleasantness of the gardens, which, however, are only a long and wide terrace. The Panthéon frightened me by a sort of horror and majesty. The grand altar and the sacristy wearied my eyes, by their immense opulence. The library did not satisfy me, and the librarians still less. I was received with much civility, and invited to a good supper in the Spanish style, at which the Prior and another

monk did the honours. After this first repast my people prepared my meals, but this fat monk always supplied one or two things that it would not have been civil to refuse, and always ate with me; for, in order that he might conduct us everywhere, he never quitted our sides. Bad Latin supplied the place of French, which he did not understand; nor even Spanish.

In the sanctuary at the grand altar, there are windows behind the seats of the priest and his assistants, who celebrate the grand mass. These windows, which are nearly on a level with the sanctuary (very high), belong to the apartment that Philippe II. had built for himself, and in which he died. He heard service through these windows. I wished to see this apartment, which was entered from behind. I was refused. It was in vain that I insisted on the orders of the King and of the nuncio, authorising me to see all I wished. I disputed uselessly. They told me this apartment had been closed ever since the death of Philippe II., and that nobody had entered it. I maintained that King Philippe V. and his suite had seen it. They admitted the fact, but at the same time told me that he had entered by force as a master, threatening to break in the doors, that he was the only King who had entered since Philippe II., and that they would not open the apartment to anybody. I understood nothing of all this superstition, but I was forced to rest content in my ignorance. Louville, who had entered with the King, had told me that the place contained only five or six dark chambers, and some holes and corners with wainscots plastered with mud;

without tapestry, when he saw it, or any kind of furniture; thus I did not lose much by not entering.

In the Rotting-Room, which I have elsewhere described, we read the inscriptions near us, and the monk read others as we asked him. We walked thus, all round, talking and discoursing thereon. Passing to the bottom of the room, the coffin of the unhappy Don Carlos offered itself to our sight.

"As for him," said I, "it is well known why, and of what he died." At this remark, the fat monk turned rusty, maintained he had died a natural death, and began to declaim against the stories which he said had been spread abroad about him. I smiled, saying, I admitted it was not true that his veins had been opened. This observation completed the irritation of the monk, who began to babble in a sort of fury. I diverted myself with it at first in silence; then I said to him, that the King, shortly after arriving in Spain, had had the curiosity to open the coffin of Don Carlos, and that I knew from a man who was present ('twas Louville), that his head had been found between his legs; that Philippe II., his father, had had it cut off before him in the prison.

"Very well!" cried the monk in fury, "apparently he had well deserved it; for Philippe II. had permission from the Pope to do so!" and, thereupon, he began to cry with all his might about the marvels of piety and of justice of Philippe II., and about the boundless power of the Pope, and to cry heresy against any one who doubted that he could not order, decide, and dispose of all.

Such is the fanaticism of the countries of the In-

quisition, where science is a crime, ignorance and superstition the first of virtues. Though my official character protected me, I did not care to dispute, and cause a ridiculous scene with this bigot of a monk. I contented myself with smiling, and by making a sign of silence as I did so to those who were with me. The monk, therefore, had full swing, and preached a long time without giving over. He perceived, perhaps, by our faces, that we were laughing at him, although without gestures or words. At last he showed us the rest of the chamber, still fuming; then we descended to the Panthéon. They did me the singular favour to light about two-thirds of the immense and admirable chandelier, suspended from the middle of the roof, the lights of which dazzled us, and enabled us to distinguish in every part of the Rotting-Room, not only the smallest details of the smallest letter, but the minutest features of the place.

I passed three days in the Escurial, lodged in a large and fine apartment, and all that were with me well lodged also. Our monk, who had always been in an ill-humour since the day of the Rotting-Room, did not recover himself until the parting breakfast came. We quitted him without regret, but not the Escurial, which would pleasantly occupy a curious connoisseur during more than a three months' stay. On the road we met the Marquis de Montalègre, who invited us to dinner with him. The meal was so good that we little regretted the dinner my people had prepared for us.

At last we arrived on the 9th, at our village of Villahalmanzo, where I found most comfortable quar-

ters for myself and all who were with me. I found there, also, my eldest son, still merely convalescent, with the Abbé de Monthon, who came from Burgos. We supped very gaily, and I reckoned upon taking a good excursion the next day, and upon amusing myself in reconnoitring the village and the environs; but fever seized me during the night, augmented during the day, became violent the following night, so that there was no more talk of going on the 11th to meet the King and Queen at Lerma, as they alighted from their coach, according to arrangement.

The malady increased with such rapidity that I was found to be in great danger, and immediately after, on the point of death. I was bled shortly after. The small-pox, with which the whole country was filled, appeared. The climate was such this year that it froze hard twelve or fourteen hours every day, while from eleven o'clock in the morning till nearly four, the sun shone as brightly as possible, and it was too hot about mid-day for walking! Yet in the shade it did not thaw for an instant. This cold weather was all the more sharp because the air was purer and clearer, and the sky continually of the most perfect serenity.

The King of Spain, who was dreadfully afraid of the small-pox, and who with reason had confidence only in his chief doctor, sent him to me as soon as he was informed of my illness, with orders not to quit me until I was cured. I had, therefore, five or six persons continually around me, in addition to the domestics who served me, one of the best and most skilful physicians in Europe, who, moreover, was

capital company, and who did not quit me night or day, and three very good surgeons. The small-pox came out very abundantly all over me; it was of a good kind, and I had no dangerous accident. Every one who waited upon me, master or man, was cut off from all intercourse with the rest of the world; even those who cooked for us, from those who did not.

The chief physician nearly every day provided new remedies in case of need, and yet administered none to me, except in giving me, as my sole beverage, water, in which, according to its quantity, oranges were thrown, cut in two with their skins on, and which gently simmered before my fire; occasionally some spoonful of a gentle and agreeable cordial during the height of the suppuration, and afterwards a little Rota wine, and some broth, made of beef and partridge.

Nothing was wanting, then, on the part of those who had charge of me. I was their only patient, and they had orders not to quit me, and nothing was wanting for my amusement, when I was in a condition to take any, so much good company being around me, and that at a time when convalescents of this malady experience all the weariness and fretfulness of it. At the end of my illness I was bled and purged once, after which I lived as usual, but in a species of solitude.

During the long interval in which this illness shut me out from all intercourse with the world, the Abbé de Saint-Simon corresponded for me with Cardinal Dubois, Grimaldo, Sartine, and some others.

The King and Queen, not content with having sent

me their chief physician, M. Hyghens, to be with me night and day, wished to hear how I was twice a day, and when I was better, unceasingly showed to me a thousand favours, in which they were imitated by all the Court.

But I was six weeks ill in all.

CHAPTER XXII.

Mode of Life of their Catholic Majesties—Their Night—Morning—Toilette—Character of Philippe V.—And of His Queen—How She Governed Him.

HERE I think will be the fitting place to introduce an account of the daily life of the King and Queen of Spain, which in many respects was entitled to be regarded as singular. During my stay at the Court I had plenty of opportunity to mark it well, so that what I relate may be said to have passed under my own eyes. This, then, was their daily life wherever they were, and in all times and seasons.

The King and Queen never had more than one apartment, and one bed between them, the latter exactly as I have described it when relating my visit with Maulevrier to their Catholic Majesties to carry to them the news of the departure from Paris of the future Princess of the Asturias. During fevers, illness, no matter of what kind, or on whose side,—childbirth even,—never were they a single night apart, and even when the deceased Queen was eaten up with the scrofula, the King continued to sleep with her until a few nights before her death!

About nine o'clock in the morning the curtains were drawn by the Asafeta, followed by a single valet

carrying a basin full of caudle. Hyghens, during my convalescence, explained to me how this caudle was made, and in fact concocted some for me to taste. It is a light mixture of broth, milk, wine (which is in the largest quantity), one or two yolks of eggs, sugar, cinnamon, and a few cloves. It is white, has a very strong taste, not unmixed with softness. I should not like to take it habitually, nevertheless it is not disagreeable. You put in it, if you like, crusts of bread, or, at times, toast, and then it becomes a species of soup; otherwise it is drunk as broth; and, ordinarily, it was in this last fashion the King took it. It is unctuous, but very warm, a restorative singularly good for retrieving the past night, and for preparing you for the next.

While the King partook of this brief breakfast, the Asafeta brought the Queen some tapestry to work at, passed bed-gowns to their Majesties, and put upon the bed some of the papers she found upon the adjoining seats, then withdrew with the valet and what he had brought. Their Majesties then said their morning prayers. Grimaldo afterwards entered. Sometimes they signalled to him to wait, as he came in, and called him when their prayer was over, for there was nobody else, and the bedroom was very small. Then Grimaldo displayed his papers, drew from his pocket an inkstand, and worked with the King; the Queen not being hindered by her tapestry from giving her opinion.

This work lasted more or less according to the business, or to the conversation. Grimaldo, upon leaving with his papers, found the adjoining room empty, and

a valet in that beyond, who, seeing him pass, entered into the empty room, crossed it, and summoned the Asafeta, who immediately came and presented to the King his slippers and his dressing-gown; he at once passed across the empty room and entered into a cabinet, where he dressed himself, followed by three valets (never changed) and by the Duc del Arco, or the Marquis de Santa Cruz, and after by both, nobody else ever being present at the ceremony.

The Queen, as soon as the King had passed into his cabinet, put on her stockings and shoes alone with the Asafeta, who gave her her dressing-gown. It was the only moment in which this person could speak to the Queen, or the Queen to her; but this moment did not stretch at the most to more than half a quarter of an hour. Had they been longer together the King would have known it, and would have wanted to hear what kept them. The Queen passed through the empty chamber and entered into a fine large cabinet, where her toilette awaited her. When the King had dressed in his cabinet—where he often spoke to his confessor—he went to the Queen's toilette, followed by the two seigneurs just named. A few of the specially-privileged were also admitted there. This toilette lasted about three-quarters of an hour, the King and all the rest of the company standing.

When it was over, the King half opened the door of the Hall of Mirrors, which leads into the salon where the Court assembled, and gave his orders; then rejoined the Queen in that room which I have so often called the empty room. There and then took place the private audiences of the foreign ministers, and of the seigneurs,

or other subjects who obtained them. Once a week, on Monday, there was a public audience, a practice which cannot be too much praised where it is not abused. The King, instead of half opening the door, threw it wide open, and admitted whoever liked to enter. People spoke to the King as much as they liked, how they liked, and gave him in writing what they liked. But the Spaniards resemble in nothing the French; they are measured, discreet, respectful, brief.

After the audiences, or after amusing himself with the Queen if there are none, the King went to dress. The Queen accompanied him, and they took the communion together (never separately) about once a week, and then they heard a second mass. The confession of the King was said after he rose, and before he went to the Queen's toilette.

Upon returning from mass, or very shortly after, the dinner was served. It was always in the Queen's apartment, as well as the supper, but the King and Queen had each their dishes; the former, few, the latter, many, for she liked eating, and ate of everything; the King always kept to the same things—soup, capon, pigeons, boiled and roast, and always a roast loin of veal—no fruit, or salad, or cheese; pastry, rarely, never *maigre;* eggs, often cooked in various fashion; and he drank nothing but champagne; the Queen the same. When the dinner was finished, they prayed to God together. If anything pressing happened, Grimaldo came and gave them a brief account of it.

About an hour after dinner, they left the apartment by a short passage accessible to the court, and descended by a little staircase to their coach, returning by the

same way. The seigneurs who frequented the court pretty constantly assembled, now one, now another, in this passage, or followed their Majesties to their coaches. Very often I saw them in this passage as they went or returned. The Queen always said something pleasant to whoever was there. I will speak elsewhere of the hunting-party their Majesties daily made.

Upon returning, the King gave his orders. If they had not partaken of a collation in the coach, they partook of one upon arriving. It was for the King, a morsel of bread, a big biscuit, some water and wine; and for the Queen, pastry and fruit in season; sometimes cheese. The Prince and the Princess of the Asturias, and the children, followed and waited for them in the inner apartment. This company withdrew in less than half a quarter of an hour. Grimaldo came and worked ordinarily for a long time; it was the time for the real work of the day. When the Queen went to confession this also was the time she selected. Except what related to the confession, she and her confessor had no time to say anything to each other. The cabinet in which she confessed to him was contiguous to the room occupied by the King, and when the latter thought the confession too long, he opened the door and called her. Grimaldo being gone, they prayed together, or sometimes occupied themselves with spiritual reading until supper. It was served like the dinner. At both meals there were more dishes in the French style than in the Spanish, or even the Italian.

After supper, conversation or prayers conducted them to the hour for bed, when nearly the same ob-

servances took place as in the morning. Finally, their Catholic Majesties everywhere had but one wardrobe between them, and were never in private one from another.

These uniform days were the same in all places, and even during the journeys taken by their Majesties, who were thus never separated, except for a few minutes at a time. They passed their lives in one long *tête-à-tête*. When they travelled it was at the merest snail's pace, and they slept on the road, night after night, in houses prepared for them. In their coach they were always alone; when in the palace it was the same.

The King had been accustomed to this monotonous life by his first queen, and he did not care for any other. The new Queen, upon arriving, soon found this out, and found also that if she wished to rule him, she must keep him in the same room, confined as he had been kept by her predecessor. Alberoni was the only person admitted to their privacy. This second marriage of the King of Spain, entirely brought about by Madame des Ursins, was very distasteful to the Spaniards, who detested that personage most warmly, and were in consequence predisposed to look unfavourably upon any one she favoured. It is true, the new Queen, on arriving, drove out Madame des Ursins, but this showed her to be possessed of as much power as the woman she displaced, and when she began to exercise that power in other directions the popular dislike to her was increased. She made no effort to mitigate it —hating the Spaniards as much as they hated her— and it is incredible to what an extent this reciprocal aversion stretched.

When the Queen went out with the King to the chase or to the atocha, the people unceasingly cried, as well as the citizens in their shops, "*Viva el Re y la Savoyana, y la Savoyana,*" and incessantly repeated, with all their lungs "*la Savoyana,*" which is the deceased Queen (I say this to prevent mistake), no voice ever crying "*Viva la Reina.*" The Queen pretended to despise this, but inwardly raged (as people saw), she could not habituate herself to it. She has said to me very frequently and more than once: "The Spaniards do not like me, and in return I hate them," with an air of anger and of pique.

These long details upon the daily life of the King and Queen may appear trivial, but they will not be judged so by those who know, as I do, what valuable information is to be gained from similar particulars. I will simply say in passing, that an experience of twenty years has convinced me that the knowledge of such details is the key to many others, and that it is always wanting in histories, often in memoirs the most interesting and instructive, but which would be much more so if they had not neglected this chapter, regarded by those who do not know its price, as a bagatelle unworthy of entering into a serious recital. Nevertheless, I am quite certain, that there is not a minister of state, a favourite, or a single person of whatever rank, initiated by his office into the domestic life of sovereigns, who will not echo my sentiments.

And now let me give a more distinct account of the King of Spain than I have yet written.

Philip V. was not gifted with superior understanding or with any stock of what is called imagination.

He was cold, silent, sad, sober, fond of no pleasure except the chase, fearing society, fearing himself, unexpansive, a recluse by taste and habits, rarely touched by others, of good sense nevertheless, and upright, with a tolerably good knowledge of things, obstinate when he liked, and often then not to be moved; nevertheless, easy at other times to govern and influence.

He was cold. In his campaigns he allowed himself to be led into any position, even under a brisk fire, without budging in the slightest; nay, amusing himself by seeing whether anybody was afraid. Secured and removed from danger he was the same, without thinking that his glory could suffer by it. He liked to make war, but was indifferent whether he went there or not; and present or absent, left everything to the generals without doing anything himself.

He was extremely vain; could bear no opposition in any of his enterprises; and what made me judge he liked praise, was that the Queen invariably praised him—even his face; and asked me one day, at the end of an audience which had led us into conversation, if I did not think him very handsome, and more so than any one I knew? His piety was only custom,—scruples, fears, little observances, without knowing anything of religion: the Pope a divinity when not opposed to him; in fact he had the outside religion of the Jesuits, of whom he was passionately fond.

Although his health was very good, he always feared for it; he was always looking after it. A physician, such as the one Louis XI. enriched so much at the end of his life, a Maitre Coythier would have become a rich and powerful personage by his side; fortunately

his physician was a thoroughly good and honourable man, and he who succeeded him devoted to the Queen. Philip V. could speak well—very well, but was often hindered by idleness and self-mistrust. In the audiences I had with him, however, he astonished me by the precision, the grace, the easiness of his words. He was good, easy to serve, familiar with a few. His love of France showed itself in everything. He preserved much gratitude and veneration for the deceased King, and tenderness for the late Monsieur; above all for the Dauphin, his brother, for whose loss he was never consoled. I noticed nothing in him towards any other of the royal family, except the King; and he never asked me concerning anybody in the Court, except, and then in a friendly manner, the Duchesse de Beauvilliers.

He had scruples respecting his crown, that can with difficulty be reconciled with the desire he had to return, in case of misfortune, to the throne of his fathers, which he had more than once so solemnly renounced. He believed himself an usurper! and in this idea nourished his desire to return to France, and abandon Spain and his scruples at one and the same time. It cannot be disguised that all this was very ill-arranged in his head, but there it was, and he would have abandoned Spain had it been possible, because he felt compelled by duty to do so. It was this feeling which principally induced him, after meditating upon it long before I arrived in Spain, to abdicate his throne in favour of his son. It was the same usurpation in his eyes, but not being able to obey his scruples, he contented himself by doing all he could in abdicating. It was still this feeling which, at the death of his son, troubled him

so much, when he saw himself compelled to reascend the throne; though, during his abdication, that son had caused him not a little vexation. As may well be imagined, Philip V. never spoke of these delicate matters to me, but I was not less well informed of them elsewhere.

The Queen desired not less to abandon Spain, which she hated, and to return into France and reign, where she hoped to lead a life of less seclusion, and much more agreeable.

Notwithstanding all I have said, it is perfectly true that Philip V. was but little troubled by the wars he made, that he was fond of enterprises, and that his passion was to be respected and dreaded, and to figure grandly in Europe.

But let me now more particularly describe the Queen.

This princess had much intellect and natural graces, which she knew how to put to account. Her sense, her reflection, and her conduct, were guided by that intellect, from which she drew all the charms and all the advantages possible. Whoever knew her was astonished to find how her intelligence and natural capacity supplied the place of her want of knowledge of the world, of persons, of affairs, upon all of which subjects, her garret life in Parma, and afterwards her secluded life with the King of Spain, hindered her from obtaining any real instruction. The perspicuity she possessed, which enabled her to see the right side of everything that came under her inspection, was undeniable, and this singular gift would have become developed in her to perfection if its growth had not been interrupted by the ill-humour she possessed;

which it must be admitted the life she led was more than enough to give her. She felt her talent and her strength, but did not feel the fatuity and pride which weakened them and rendered them ridiculous. The current of her life was simple, smooth, with a natural gaiety even, which sparkled through the eternal restraint of her existence; and despite the ill-temper and the sharpness which this restraint without rest gave her, she was a woman ordinarily without pretension, and really charming.

When she arrived in Spain she was sure, in the first place, of driving away Madame des Ursins, and of filling her place in the government at once. She seized that place, and took possession also of the King's mind, which she soon entirely ruled. As to public business, nothing could be hidden from her. The King always worked in her presence, never otherwise; all that he saw alone she read and discussed with him. She was always present at all the private audiences that he gave, whether to his subjects or to the foreign ministers; so that, as I have before remarked, nothing possibly could escape her.

As for the King, the eternal night and day *tête-à-tête* she had with him enabled her to sound him thoroughly, to know him by heart, so to speak. She knew perfectly the time for preparatory insinuations, their success; the resistance, when there was any, its course and how to overcome it; the moments for yielding, in order to return afterwards to the charge, and those for holding firm and carrying everything by force. She stood in need of all these intrigues, notwithstanding her credit with the King. If I may dare to say it, his tem-

perament was her strong point, and she sometimes had recourse to it. Then her coldness excited tempests. The King cried and menaced; now and then went further; she held firm, wept, and sometimes defended herself. In the morning all was stormy. The immediate attendants acted towards King and Queen often without penetrating the cause of their quarrel. Peace was concluded at the first opportunity, rarely to the disadvantage of the Queen, who mostly had her own way.

A quarrel of this sort arose when I was at Madrid; and I was advised, after hearing details I will not repeat, to mix myself up in it, but I burst out laughing and took good care not to follow this counsel.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The King's Taste for Hunting—Preparations for a Battue—Dull Work—My Plans to Obtain the Grandesse—Treachery of Dubois—Friendship of Grimaldo—My Success.

THE chase was every day the amusement of the King, and the Queen was obliged to make it hers. But it was always the same. Their Catholic Majesties did me the singular honour to invite me to it once, and I went in my coach. Thus I saw this pleasure well, and to see it once is to see it always. Animals to shoot are not met with in the plains. They must be sought for among the mountains,—and there the ground is too rugged for hunting the stag, the wild boar, and other beasts as we hunt the hare,—and elsewhere. The plains even are so dry, so hard, so full of deep crevices (that are not perceived until their brink is reached), that the best hounds or harriers would soon be knocked up, and would have their feet blistered, nay lamed, for a long time. Besides, the ground is so thickly covered with sturdy vegetation that the hounds could not derive much help from their noses. Mere shooting on the wing the King had long since quitted, and he had ceased to mount his horse; thus the chase simply resolved itself into a battue.

The Duc del Orco, who, by his post of grand écuyer, had the superintendence of all the hunting arrangements, chose the place where the King and Queen were to go. Two large arbours were erected there, the one against the other, entirely shut in, except where two large openings, like windows, were made, of breast-height. The King, the Queen, the captain of the guards, and the grand écuyer were in the first arbour with about twenty guns and the wherewithal to load them. In the other arbour, the day I was present, were the Prince of the Asturias, who came in his coach with the Duc de Popoli and the Marquis del Surco, the Marquis de Santa Cruz, the Duc Giovenazzo, majordomo, major and grand écuyer to the Queen, Valouse, two or three officers of the body-guard, and I myself. We had a number of guns, and some men to load them. A single lady of the palace followed the Queen all alone, in another coach, which she did not quit; she carried with her, for her consolation, a book or some work, for no one approached her. Their Majesties and their suite went to the chase in hot haste with relays of guards and of coach horses, for the distance was at least three or four leagues; at the least double that from Paris to Versailles. The party alighted at the arbours, and immediately the carriages, the poor lady of the palace, and all the horses were led away far out of sight, lest they should frighten the beasts.

Two, three, four hundred peasants had early in the morning beaten the country round, with hue and cry, after having enclosed it and driven all the animals together as near these arbours as possible.

When in the arbour you were not allowed to stir, or to make the slightest remarks, or to wear attractive colours; and everybody stood up in silence.

This period of expectation lasted an hour and a half, and did not appear to me very amusing. At last we heard loud cries from afar, and soon after we saw troops of animals pass and repass within shot and within half-shot of us; and then the King and the Queen banged away in good earnest. This diversion, or rather species of butchery, lasted more than half an hour, during which stags, hinds, roe-bucks, boars, hares, wolves, badgers, foxes, and numberless pole-cats passed, and were killed or lamed. We were obliged to let the King and Queen fire first, although pretty often they permitted the grand écuyer and the captain of the guard to fire also; and as we did not know from whom came the report, we were obliged to wait until the King's arbour was perfectly silent; then let the Prince shoot, who very often had nothing to shoot at, and we still less. Nevertheless, I killed a fox, but a little before I ought to have done so, at which, somewhat ashamed, I made my excuses to the Prince of the Asturias, who burst out laughing, and the company also, I following their example and all passing very politely.

In proportion as the peasants approach and draw nearer each other, the sport advances, and it finishes when they all come close to the arbours, still shouting, and with nothing more behind them. Then the coaches return, the company quits the arbours, the beasts killed are laid before the King. They are placed afterwards behind the coaches. During all

this, conversation respecting the sport rolls on. We carried away this day about a dozen or more beasts, some hares, foxes, and pole-cats. The night overtook us soon after we quitted the arbours.

And this is the daily diversion of their Catholic Majesties.

It is time now, however, to resume the thread of my narrative, from which these curious and little-known details have led me.

I have shown in its place the motive which made me desire my embassy; it was to obtain the *grandesse* for my second son, and thus to "branch" my house. I also desired to obtain the Toison d'Or for my eldest son, that he might derive from this journey an ornament which, at his age, was a decoration. I had left Paris with full liberty to employ every aid in order to obtain these things; I had, too, from M. le Duc d'Orléans, the promise that he would expressly ask the King of Spain for the former favour, employing the name of the King, and letters of the strongest kind from Cardinal Dubois to Grimaldo and Father Aubenton. In the midst of the turmoil of affairs I spoke to both of these persons, and was favourably attended to.

Grimaldo was upright and truthful. He conceived a real friendship for me, and gave me, during my stay at Madrid, all sorts of proofs of it. He said that this union of the two Courts by the two marriages might influence the ministers. His sole point of support, in order to maintain himself in the post he occupied, so brilliant and so envied, was the King of Spain. The Queen, he found, could never be a

solid foundation on which to repose. He wished, then, to support himself upon France, or at least to have no opposition from it, and he perfectly well knew the duplicity and caprices of Cardinal Dubois. The Court of Spain, at all times so watchful over M. le Duc d'Orléans, in consequence of what had passed in the time of the Princesse des Ursins, and during the Regency, was not ignorant of the intimate and uninterrupted confidence of this prince in me, or of the terms on which I was with him. These sort of things appear larger than they are, when seen from afar, and the choice that had been made of me for this singular embassy confirmed it still more! Grimaldo, then, might have thought to assure my friendship in his behalf, and my influence with M. le Duc d'Orléans, occasion demanding it; and I don't think I am deceiving myself in attributing to him this policy while he aided me to obtain a favour, at bottom quite natural, and which could cause him no inconvenience.

I regarded the moment at which the marriage would be celebrated as that at which I stood most chance of obtaining what I desired, and I considered that if it passed over without result to me, all would grow cold, and become uncertain, and very disagreeable. I had forgotten nothing during this first stay in Madrid, in order to please everybody, and I make bold to say that I had all the better succeeded because I had tried to give weight and merit to my politeness, measuring it according to the persons I addressed, without prostitution and without avarice, and that's what made me hasten to learn all

I could of the birth, of the dignities, of the posts, of the alliances, of the reputation of each, so as to play my cards well, and secure the game.

But still I needed the letters of M. le Duc d'Orléans, and of Cardinal Dubois. I did not doubt the willingness of the Regent, but I did doubt, and very much too, that of his minister. It has been seen what reason I had for this.

These letters ought to have arrived at Madrid at the same time that I did, but they had not come, and there seemed no prospect of their arriving. What redoubled my impatience was that I read them beforehand, and that I wished to have the time to reflect, and to turn round, in order to draw from them, in spite of them, all the help I could. I reckoned that these letters would be in a feeble spirit, and this opinion made me more desirous to fortify my batteries in Spain in order to render myself agreeable to the King and Queen, and to inspire them with the desire to grant me the favours I wished.

A few days before going to Lerma I received letters from Cardinal Dubois upon my affair. Nobody could be more eager or more earnest than the Cardinal, for he gave me advice how to arrive at my aim, and pressed me to look out for everything which could aid me; assuring me that his letters, and those of M. le Duc d'Orléans, would arrive in time. In the midst of the perfume of so many flowers, the odour of falsehood could nevertheless be smelt. I had reckoned upon this. I had done all in my power to supply the place of these letters. I received therefore not as gospel, all the marvels Dubois sent me,

and I set out for Lerma fully resolved to more and more cultivate my affair without reckoning upon the letters promised me; but determined to draw as much advantage from them as I could.

Upon arriving at Lerma I fell ill as I have described, and the small-pox kept me confined forty days. The letters so long promised and so long expected did not arrive until the end of my quarantine. They were just what I expected. Cardinal Dubois explained himself to Grimaldo in turns and circumlocution, and if one phrase displayed eagerness and desire, the next destroyed it by an air of respect and of discretion, protesting he wished simply what the King of Spain would himself wish, with all the seasoning necessary for the annihilation of his good offices under the pretence that he did not wish to press his Majesty to anything or to importune him.

This written stammering savoured of the bombast of a man who had no desire to serve me, but who, not daring to break his word, used all his wits to twist and overrate the little he could not hinder himself from saying. This letter was simply for Grimaldo, as the letter of M. le Duc d'Orléans was simply for the King of Spain. The last was even weaker than the first. It was like a design in pencil nearly effaced by the rain, and in which nothing connected appeared. It scarcely touched upon the real point, but lost itself in respects, in reservations, in deference, and would propose nothing that was not according to the taste of the King! In a word, the letter withdrew rather than advanced, and was a sort of ease-conscience which could not be refused, and which did not promise much success.

It is easy to understand that these letters much displeased me. Although I had anticipated all the malice of Cardinal Dubois, I found it exceeded my calculations, and that it was more undisguised than I imagined it would be.

Such as the letters were I was obliged to make use of them. The Abbé de Saint-Simon wrote to Grimaldo and to Sartine, enclosing these letters, for I myself did not yet dare to write on account of the precautions I was obliged to use against the bad air. Sartine and Grimaldo, to whom I had not confided my suspicions that these recommendations would be in a very weak tone, were thrown into the utmost surprise on reading them.

They argued together, they were indignant, they searched for a bias to strengthen that which had so much need of strength, but this bias could not be found; they consulted together, and Grimaldo formed a bold resolution, which astonished me to the last degree, and much troubled me also.

He came to the conclusion that these letters would assuredly do me more harm than good; that they must be suppressed, never spoken of to the King, who must be confirmed without them in the belief that in according me these favours he would confer upon M. le Duc d'Orléans a pleasure, all the greater, because he saw to what point extended all his reserve in not speaking to him about this matter, and mine in not asking for these favours through his Royal Highness, as there was every reason to believe I should do. Grimaldo proposed to draw from these circumstances all the benefit he proposed to have drawn from

the letters had they been written in a fitting spirit, and he said he would answer for it, I should have the *grandesse* and the Toison d'Or without making the slightest allusion to the cold recommendations of M. le Duc d'Orléans to the King of Spain, and of Dubois to him.

Sartine, by his order, made this known to the Abbé de Saint-Simon, who communicated it to me, and after having discussed together with Hyghens, who knew the ground as well as they, and who had really devoted himself to me, I blindly abandoned myself to the guidance and friendship of Grimaldo, with full success, as will be seen.

In relating here the very singular fashion by which my affair succeeded, I am far indeed from abstracting from M. le Duc d'Orléans all gratitude. If he had not confided to me the double marriage, without the knowledge of Dubois, and in spite of the secrecy that had been asked for, precisely on my account, I should not have been led to beg of him the embassy.

I instantly asked for it, declaring that my sole aim was the *grandesse* for my second son, and he certainly accorded it to me with this aim, and promised to aid me with his recommendation in order to arrive at it, but with the utmost secrecy on account of the vexation Dubois would feel, and in order to give himself time to arrange with the minister and induce him to swallow the pill.

If I had not had the embassy in this manner, it would certainly have escaped me; and thus would have been lost all hope of the *grandesse*, to obtain which there would have been no longer occasion, reason, or means.

The friendship and the confidence of this prince prevailed then over the witchery which his miserable preceptor had cast upon him, and if he afterwards yielded to the roguery, to the schemes, to the folly which Dubois employed in the course of this embassy to ruin and disgrace me, and to bring about the failure of the sole object which had made me desire it, we must only blame his villainy and the deplorable feebleness of M. le Duc d'Orléans, which caused me many sad embarrassments, and did so much harm, but which even did more harm to the state and to the prince himself.

It is with this sad but only too true reflection that I finish the year 1721.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Marriage of the Prince of the Asturias—An Ignorant Cardinal — I am Made Grandee of Spain — The Vidâme de Chartres Named Chevalier of the Golden Fleece—His Reception — My Adieux — A Belching Princess — Return to France.

THE Regent's daughter arrived in Spain at the commencement of the year 1722, and it was arranged that her marriage with the Prince of the Asturias should be celebrated on the 30th of January at Lerma, where their Catholic Majesties were then staying. It was some little distance from my house. I was obliged therefore to start early in the morning in order to arrive in time. On the way I paid a visit of ceremony to the Princess, at Cogollos, ate a mouthful of something, and turned off to Lerma.

As soon as I arrived there, I went to the Marquis of Grimaldo's apartments. His chamber was at the end of a vast room, a piece of which had been portioned off, in order to serve as a chapel. Once again I had to meet the nuncio, and I feared lest he should remember what had passed on a former occasion, and that I should give Dubois a handle for complaint. I saw, therefore, but very imperfectly, the reception of the Princess; to meet whom the King and Queen

(who lodged below) and the Prince precipitated themselves, so to speak, almost to the steps of the coach. I quietly went up again to the chapel.

The prie-dieu of the King was placed in front of the altar, a short distance from the steps, precisely as the King's prie-dieu is placed at Versailles, but closer to the altar, and with a cushion on each side of it. The chapel was void of courtiers. I placed myself to the right of the King's cushion just beyond the edge of the carpet, and amused myself there better than I had expected. Cardinal Borgia, pontifically clad, was in the corner, his face turned towards me, learning his lesson between two chaplains in surplices, who held a large book open in front of him. The good prelate did not know how to read; he tried, however, and read aloud, but inaccurately. The chaplains took him up, he grew angry, scolded them, recommenced, was again corrected, again grew angry, and to such an extent that he turned round upon them and shook them by their surplices. I laughed as much as I could; for he perceived nothing, so occupied and entangled was he with his lesson.

Marriages in Spain are performed in the afternoon, and commence at the door of the church, like baptisms. The King, the Queen, the Prince, and the Princess arrived with all the Court, and the King was announced. "Let them wait," said the Cardinal in choler, "I am not ready." They waited, in fact, and the Cardinal continued his lesson, redder than his hat, and still furious. At last he went to the door, at which a ceremony took place that lasted some time. Had I not been obliged to continue at my post,

curiosity would have made me follow him. That I lost some amusement is certain, for I saw the King and Queen laughing and looking at their prie-dieu, and all the Court laughing also. The nuncio arriving and seeing by the position I had taken up that I was preceding him, again indicated his surprise to me by gestures, repeating, "Signor, signor;" but I had resolved to understand nothing, and laughingly pointed out the Cardinal to him, and reproached him for not having better instructed the worthy prelate for the honour of the Sacred College. The nunico understood French very well, but spoke it very badly. This banter and the innocent air with which I gave it, without appearing to notice his demonstrations, created such a fortunate diversion, that nobody else was thought of; more especially as the poor cardinal more and more caused amusement while continuing the ceremony, during which he neither knew where he was nor what he was doing, being taken up and corrected every moment by his chaplains, and fuming against them so that neither the King nor the Queen could contain themselves. It was the same with everybody else who witnessed the scene.

I could see nothing more than the back of the Prince and the Princess as they knelt each upon a cushion between the prie-dieu and the altar, the Cardinal in front making grimaces indicative of the utmost confusion. Happily all I had to think of was the nuncio, the King's majordomo-major having placed himself by the side of his son, captain of the guards. The grandees were crowded around with the most considerable people: the rest filled all the chapel so that there was no stirring.

Amidst the amusement supplied to us by the poor Cardinal, I remarked extreme satisfaction in the King and Queen at seeing this grand marriage accomplished. The ceremony finished, as it was not long, only the King, the Queen, and, when necessary, the Prince and Princess kneeling; their Catholic Majesties rose and withdrew towards the left corner of their foot-cloth, talked together for a short time, after which the Queen remained where she was, and the King advanced to me, I being where I had been during all the ceremony.

The King did me the honour to say to me, "Monsieur, in every respect I am so pleased with you, and particularly for the manner in which you have acquitted yourself of your embassy, that I wish to give you some marks of my esteem, of my satisfaction, of my friendship. I make you Grandee of Spain of the first class; you, and, at the same time, whichever of your sons you may wish to have the same distinction; and your eldest son I will make chevalier of the Toison d'Or."

I immediately embraced his knees, and I tried to testify to him my gratitude and my extreme desire to render myself worthy of the favour he deigned to spread upon me, by my attachment, my very humble services, and my most profound respect. Then I kissed his hand, turned and sent for my children, employing the moments which had elapsed before they came in uttering fresh thanks. As soon as my sons appeared, I called the younger and told him to embrace the knees of the King who overwhelmed us with favours, and made him grandee of Spain with me. He kissed

the King's hand in rising, the King saying he was very glad of what he had just done. I presented the elder to him afterwards, to thank him for the Toison. He simply bent very low and kissed the King's hand. As soon as this was at an end, the King went towards the Queen, and I followed him with my children. I bent very low before the Queen, thanked her, then presented to her my children, the younger first, the elder afterwards. The Queen received us with much goodness, said a thousand civil things, then walked away with the King, followed by the Prince, having upon his arm the Princess, whom we saluted in passing; and they returned to their apartments. I wished to follow them, but was carried away, as it were, by the crowd which pressed eagerly around me to compliment me. I was very careful to reply in a fitting manner to each, and with the utmost politeness, and though I but little expected these favours at this moment, I found afterwards that all this numerous court was pleased with me.

A short time after the celebration of the marriage between the Regent's daughter and the Prince of the Asturias, the day came on which my eldest son was to receive the Toison d'Or. The Duc de Liria was to be his godfather, and it was he who conducted us to the place of ceremony. His carriage was drawn by four perfectly beautiful Neapolitan horses; but these animals, which are often extremely fantastical, would not stir. The whip was vigorously applied; results—rearing, snorting, fury, the carriage in danger of being upset. Time was flying; I begged the Duc de Liria, therefore, to get into my carriage, so

that we might not keep the King and the company waiting for us. It was in vain I represented to him that his function of godfather would in no way be affected by changing his own coach for mine, since it would be by necessity. He would not listen to me. The horses continued their game for a good half hour before they consented to start.

All my cortége followed us, for I wished by this display to show the King of Spain how highly I appreciated the honours of his Court. On the way the horses again commenced their pranks. I again pressed the Duc de Liria to change his coach, and he again refused. Fortunately the pause this time was much shorter than at first; but before we reached the end of our journey there came a message to say that the King was waiting for us. At last we arrived, and as soon as the King was informed of it he entered the room where the chapter of the order was assembled. He straightway sat himself down in an armchair, and while the rest of the company were placing themselves in position, the Queen, the Princess of the Asturias, and their suite, seated themselves as simple spectators at the end of the room.

All the chapter having arranged themselves in order, the door in front of the King, by which we had entered, was closed, my son remaining outside with a number of the courtiers. Then the King covered himself, and all the chevaliers at the same time, in the midst of a silence, without sign, which lasted as long as a little prayer. After this, the King very briefly proposed that the Vidâme de Chartres should be received into the order. All the chevaliers uncovered

themselves, made an inclination, without rising, and covered themselves again. After another silence, the King called the Duc de Liria, who uncovered himself, and with a reverence approached the King, by whom he was thus addressed: "Go and see if the Vidâme de Chartres is not somewhere about here."

The Duc de Liria made another reverence to the King, but none to the chevaliers (who, nevertheless, were uncovered at the same time as he), went away, the door was closed upon him, and the chevaliers covered themselves again. The reverences just made, and those I shall have occasion to speak of in the course of my description were the same as are seen at the receptions of the chevaliers of the Saint-Esprit, and in all grand ceremonies.

The Duc de Liria remained outside nearly a quarter of an hour, because it is assumed that the new chevalier is ignorant of the proposition made for him, and that it is only by chance he is found in the palace, time being needed in order to look for him. The Duc de Liria returned, and immediately after the door was again closed, and he advanced to the King, as before, saying that the Vidâme de Chartres was in the other room.

Upon this the King ordered him to go and ask the Vidâme if he wished to accept the Order of the Toison d'Or, and be received into it, and undertake to observe its statutes, its duties, its ceremonies, take its oaths, promise to fulfil all the conditions submitted to every one who is admitted into it, and agree to conduct himself in everything like a good, loyal, brave, and virtuous chevalier. The Duc de Liria

withdrew as he had before withdrawn. The door was again closed. He returned after having been absent a shorter time than at first. The door was again closed, and he approached the King as before, and announced to him the consent and the thanks of the Vidâme. "Very well," replied the King. "Go seek him, and bring him here."

The Duc de Liria withdrew, as on the previous occasions, and immediately returned, having my son on his left. The door being open, anybody was at liberty to enter, and see the ceremony.

The Duc de Liria conducted my son to the feet of the King, and then seated himself in his place. My son, in advancing, had lightly inclined himself to the chevaliers, right and left; and after having made in the middle of the room a profound bow, knelt before the King, without quitting his sword, and having his hat under his arm, and no gloves on. The chevaliers, who had uncovered themselves at the entry of the Duc de Liria, covered themselves when he sat down, and the Prince of the Asturias acted precisely as they acted.

The King repeated to my son the same things, a little more lengthily, that had been said to him by the Duc de Liria, and received his promise upon each in succession. Afterwards, an attendant, who was standing in waiting behind the table, presented to the King, from between the table and the chair, a large book, open, and in which was a long oath, that my son repeated to the King, who had the book upon his knees, the oath in French, and on loose paper, being in it. This ceremony lasted rather a long time.

Afterwards, my son kissed the King's hand, and the King made him rise and pass, without reverence, directly before the table, towards the middle of which he knelt, his back to the Prince of the Asturias, his face to the attendant, who showed him (the table being between them) what to do. There was upon this table a great crucifix of enamel upon a stand, with a missal open at the Canon, the Gospel of Saint-John, and forms, in French, of promises and oaths to be made, whilst putting the hand now upon the Canon, now upon the Gospel. The oath-making took up some time; after which my son came back and knelt before the King again as before.

Then, the Duc del Orco, grand écuyer, and Valouse, premier écuyer, who have had the Toison since, and who were near me, went away, the Duke first, Valouse behind him, carrying in his two hands, with marked care and respect, the sword of the Grand Captain, Don Gonzalvo de Cordova, who is never called otherwise. They walked, with measured step, outside the right-hand seats of the chevaliers, then entered the chapter, where the Duc de Liria had entered with my son, marched inside the left-hand seats of the chevaliers, without reverence, but the Duke inclining himself, Valouse not doing so on account of the respect due to the sword; the grandees did not incline themselves.

The Duke on arriving between the Prince of the Asturias and the King, knelt, and Valouse knelt behind him. Some moments after, the King made a sign to them; Valouse drew the sword from its sheath which he put under his arm, held the naked

weapon by the middle of the blade, kissed the hilt, and presented it to the King, who, without uncovering himself, kissed the pommel, took the sword in both hands by the handle, held it upright some moments; then held it with one hand, but almost immediately with the other as well, and struck it three times upon each shoulder of my son, alternately, saying to him, "By Saint-George and Saint-Andrew I make you Chevalier." And the weight of the sword was so great that the blows did not fall lightly. While the King was striking them, the grand écuyer and the premier remained in their places kneeling. The sword was returned as it had been presented, and kissed in the same manner. Valouse put it back into its sheath, after which the grand écuyer and the premier écuyer returned as they came.

This sword, handle included, was more than four feet long; the blade four good digits wide, thick in proportion, insensibly diminishing in thickness and width to the point, which was very small. The handle appeared to me of worked enamel, long and very large, as well as the pommel; the crossed piece long, and the two ends wide, even, worked, without branch. I examined it well, and I could not hold it in the air with one hand, still less handle it with both hands except with much difficulty. It is pretended that this is the sword the Great Captain made use of, and with which he obtained so many victories.

I marvelled at the strength of the men of those days, with whom I believe early habits did much. I was touched by the grand honour rendered to the Great Captain's memory; his sword becoming the

sword of the State, carried even by the King with great respect. I repeated, more than once, that if I were the Duc de Scose (who descends in a direct line from the Great Captain by the female branch, the male being extinct), I would leave nothing undone to obtain the Toison, in order to enjoy the honour and the sensible pleasure of being struck by this sword, and with such great respect for my ancestor. But to return to the ceremony from which this little digression has taken me.

The accolade being given by the King after the blows with the sword, fresh oaths being taken at his feet, then before the table as at first, and on this occasion at greater length, my son returned and knelt before the King, but without saying anything more. Then Grimaldo rose and, without reverence, left the chapter by the left, went behind the right-hand seats of the chevaliers, and took the collar of the Toison which was extended at the end of the table. At this moment the King told my son to rise, and to remain standing in the same place. The Prince of the Asturias, and the Marquis de Villena then rose also, and approached my son, both covered, all the other chevaliers remaining seated and covered. Then Grimaldo, passing between the table and the empty seat of the Prince of the Asturias, presented, standing, the collar to the King, who took it with both hands, and meanwhile Grimaldo, passing behind the Prince of the Asturias, went and placed himself behind my son. As soon as he was there, the King told my son to bend very low, but without kneeling, and then leaning forward, but without rising, placed the collar upon him, and

made him immediately after stand upright. The King then took hold of the collar, simply holding the end of it in his hand. At the same time, the collar was attached to the left shoulder by the Prince of the Asturias, to the right shoulder by the Marquis de Villena, and behind by Grimaldo; the King still holding the end.

When the collar was attached, the Prince of the Asturias, the Marquis de Villena, and Grimaldo, without making a reverence and no chevalier uncovering himself, went back to their places, and sat down; at the same moment my son knelt before the King, and bared his head. Then the Duc de Liria, without reverence, and uncovered (no chevalier uncovering himself), placed himself before the King at the left, by the side of my son, and both made their reverences to the King; turned round to the Prince of the Asturias, did the same to him, he rising and doing my son the honour to embrace him, and as soon as he was re-seated they made a reverence to him; then, turning to the King, made him one; afterwards they did the same to the Marquis de Villena, who rose and embraced my son. Then he re-seated himself; upon which they made a reverence to him, then turning again towards the King, made another to him; and so on from right to left until every chevalier had been bowed to in a similar manner. Then my son sat down, and the Duc de Liria returned to his place.

After this long series of bows, so bewildering for those who play the chief part in it, the King remained a short time in his arm-chair, then rose, un-

covered himself, and retired into his apartment as he came. I had instructed my son to hurry forward and arrive before him at the door of his inner apartment. He was in time, and I also, to kiss the hand of the King, and to express our thanks, which were well received. The Queen arrived and overwhelmed us with compliments. I must observe that the ceremony of the sword and the accolade are not performed at the reception of those who, having already another order, are supposed to have received them, like the chevaliers of the Saint-Esprit and of Saint-Michel, and the chevaliers of Saint-Louis.

Their Catholic Majesties being gone, we withdrew to my house, where a very grand dinner was prepared. The usage is, before the reception, to visit all the chevaliers of the Toison, and when the day is fixed, to visit all those invited to dinner on the day of the ceremony; the godfather, with the other chevalier by whom he is accompanied, also invites them at the palace before they enter the chapter, and aids the new chevalier to do the honours of the repast. I had led my son with me to pay these visits. Nearly all the chevaliers came to dine with us, and many other nobles. The Duc d'Albuquerque, whom I met pretty often, and who had excused himself from attending a dinner I had previously given, on account of his stomach (ruined as he said in the Indies), said he would not refuse me twice, on condition that I permitted him to take nothing but soup, because meat was too solid for him. He came, and partook of six sorts of soup, moderately of all; he afterwards lightly soaked his bread in such ragoûts

as were near him, eating only the end, and finding everything very good. He drank nothing but wine and water. The dinner was gay, in spite of the great number of guests. The Spaniards eat as much as, nay more than, we, and with taste, choice, and pleasure: as to drink, they are very modest.

On the 13th of March, 1722, their Catholic Majesties returned from their excursion to the Retiro. The hurried journey I had just made to the former place, immediately after the arrival of a courier, and in spite of most open prohibitions forbidding every one to go there, joined to the fashion, full of favour and goodness, with which I had been distinguished by their Majesties ever since my arrival in Spain, caused a most ridiculous rumour to obtain circulation, and which, to my great surprise, at once gained much belief.

It was reported there that I was going to quit my position of ambassador from France, and be declared prime minister of Spain! The people who had been pleased, apparently, with the expense I had kept up, and to whom not one of my suite had given the slightest cause of complaint, set to crying after me in the streets; announcing my promotion, displaying joy at it, and talking of it even in the shops. A number of persons even assembled round my house to testify to me their pleasure. I dispersed them as civilly and as quickly as possible, assuring them the report was not true, and that I was forthwith about to return to France.

This was nothing more than the truth. I had finished all my business. It was time to think about

setting out. As soon, however, as I talked about going, there was nothing which the King and the Queen did not do to detain me. All the Court, too, did me the favour to express much friendship for me, and regret at my departure. I admit even that I could not easily make up my mind to quit a country where I had found nothing but fruits and flowers, and to which I was attached, as I shall ever be, by esteem and gratitude. I made at once a number of farewell visits among the friends I had been once acquainted with; and on the 21st of March I had my parting state audiences of the King and Queen separately. I was surprised with the dignity, the precision, and the measure of the King's expressions, as I had been surprised at my first audience. I received many marks of personal goodness, and of regret at my departure, from his Catholic Majesty, and from the Queen even more; from the Prince of the Asturias a good many also. But in another direction I met with very different treatment, which I cannot refrain from describing, however ridiculous it may appear.

I went, of course, to say my adieux to the Princess of the Asturias, and I was accompanied by all my suite. I found the young lady standing under a daïs, the ladies on one side, the grandees on the other; and I made my three reverences, then uttered my compliments. I waited in silence her reply, but 'twas in vain. She answered not one word.

After some moments of silence, I thought I would furnish her with matter for an answer; so I asked her what orders she had for the King, for the In-

fanta, for Madame, and for M. and Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans. By way of reply, she looked at me and belched so loudly in my face, that the noise echoed throughout the chamber. My surprise was such that I was stupefied. A second belch followed as noisy as the first.

I lost countenance at this, and all power of hindering myself from laughing. Turning round, therefore, I saw everybody with their hands upon their mouths, and their shoulders in motion. At last a third belch, still louder than the two others, threw all present into confusion, and forced me to take flight, followed by all my suite, amid shouts of laughter, all the louder because they had previously been kept in. But all barriers of restraint were now thrown down; Spanish gravity was entirely disconcerted; all was deranged; no reverences; each person, bursting with laughter, escaped as he could, the Princess all the while maintaining her countenance. Her belches were the only answers she made me. In the adjoining room we all stopped to laugh at our ease, and express our astonishment afterwards more freely.

The King and Queen were soon informed of the success of this audience, and spoke of it to me after dinner at the Racket Court. They were the first to laugh at it, so as to leave others at liberty to do so too; a privilege that was largely made use of without pressing. I received and I paid numberless visits; and as it is easy to flatter one's self, I fancied I might flatter myself that I was regretted.

I left Madrid on the 24th of March, after having had the honour of paying my court to their Catholic

Majesties all the afternoon at the Racket Court, they overwhelming me with civilities, and begging me to take a final adieu of them in their apartments. I had devoted the last few days to the friends whom, during my short stay of six months, I had made. Whatever might be the joy and eagerness I felt at the prospect of seeing Madame de Saint-Simon and my Paris friends again, I could not quit Spain without feeling my heart moved, or without regretting persons from whom I had received so many marks of goodness, and for whom, all I had seen of the nation, had made me conceive esteem, respect, and gratitude. I kept up, for many years, a correspondence with Grimaldo, while he lived, in fact, and after his fall and disgrace, which occurred long after my departure, with more care and attention than formerly. My attachment, full of respect and gratitude for the King and Queen of Spain, induced me to do myself the honour of writing to them on all occasions. They often did me the honour to reply to me; and always charged their new ministers in France and the persons of consideration who came there, to convey to me the expression of their good feeling for me.

After a journey without particular incident, I embarked early one morning upon the Garonne, and soon arrived at Bordeaux. The jurats did me the honour to ask, through Segur, the under-mayor, at what time they might come and salute me. I invited them to supper, and said to Segur that compliments would be best uttered glass in hand. They came, therefore, to supper, and appeared to me much pleased with this civility. On the morrow, the tide early car-

ried me to Blaye, the weather being most delightful. I slept only one night there, and to save time did not go to Ruffec.

On the 13th of April, I arrived, about five o'clock in the afternoon, at Loches. I slept there because I wished to write a volume of details to the Duchesse de Beauvilliers, who was six leagues off, at one of her estates. I sent my packet by an express, and in this manner I was able to say what I liked to her without fearing that the letter would be opened.

On the morrow, the 14th, I arrived at Etampes, where I slept, and the 15th, at ten o'clock in the morning, I reached Chartres, where Madame de Saint-Simon was to meet me, dine, and sleep, so that we might have the pleasure of opening our hearts to each other, and of finding ourselves together again in solitude and in liberty, greater than could be hoped for in Paris during the first few days of my return. The Duc d'Humières and Louville came with her. She arrived an hour after me, fixing herself in the little château of the Marquis d'Arpajan, who had lent it to her, and where the day appeared to us very short as well as the next morning, the 16th of April.

To conclude the account of my journey, let me say that I arrived in Paris shortly after, and at once made the best of my way to the Palais Royal, where M. le Duc d'Orléans gave me a sincere and friendly welcome.

CHAPTER XXV.

Attempted Reconciliation between Dubois and Villeroy—Violent Scene—Trap Laid for the Maréchal—Its Success—His Arrest.

FEW events of importance had taken place during my absence in Spain. Shortly after my return, however, a circumstance occurred which may fairly claim description from me. Let me, therefore, at once relate it.

Cardinal Dubois, every day more and more firmly established in the favour of M. le Duc d'Orléans, pined for nothing less than to be declared prime minister. He was already virtually in that position, but was not publicly or officially recognised as being so. He wished, therefore, to be declared.

One great obstacle in his path was the Maréchal de Villeroy, with whom he was on very bad terms, and whom he was afraid of transforming into an open and declared enemy, owing to the influence the Maréchal exerted over others. Tormented with agitating thoughts, every day that delayed his nomination seemed to him a year. Dubois became doubly ill-tempered and capricious, more and more inaccessible, and accordingly the most pressing and most im-

portant business was utterly neglected. At last he resolved to make a last effort at reconciliation with the Maréchal, but mistrusting his own powers, decided upon asking Cardinal Bissy to be the mediator between them.

Bissy with great willingness undertook the peaceful commission; spoke to Villeroy, who appeared quite ready to make friends with Dubois, and even consented to go and see him. As chance would have it, he went, accompanied by Bissy, on Tuesday morning. I at the same time went, as was my custom, to Versailles to speak to M. le Duc d'Orléans upon some subject, I forget now what.

It was the day on which the foreign ministers had their audience of Cardinal Dubois, and when Bissy and Villeroy arrived, they found these ministers waiting in the chamber adjoining the Cardinal's cabinet.

The established usage is that they have their audience according to the order in which they arrive, so as to avoid all disputes among them as to rank and precedence. Thus Bissy and Villeroy found Dubois closeted with the Russian minister. It was proposed to inform the Cardinal at once, of a thing so rare as a visit from the Maréchal de Villeroy; but the Maréchal would not permit it, and sat down upon a sofa with Bissy to wait like the rest.

The audience being over, Dubois came from his cabinet, conducting the Russian minister, and immediately saw his sofa so well ornamented. He saw nothing but that in fact; on the instant he ran there, paid a thousand compliments to the Maréchal for anticipating him, when he was only waiting for per-

mission to call upon him, and begged him and Bissy to step into the cabinet. While they were going there, Dubois made his excuses to the ambassadors for attending to Villeroy before them, saying that his functions and his assiduity as governor of the King did not permit him to be long absent from the presence of his Majesty; and with this compliment he quitted them and returned into his cabinet.

At first nothing passed but reciprocal compliments and observations from Cardinal Bissy, appropriate to the subject. Then followed protestations from Dubois and replies from the Maréchal. Thus far, the sea was very smooth. But absorbed in his song, the Maréchal began to forget its tune; then to plume himself upon his frankness and upon his plain speaking; then by degrees, growing hot in his honours, he gave utterance to divers naked truths, closely akin to insults.

Dubois, much astonished, pretended not to feel the force of these observations, but as they increased every moment, Bissy tried to call back the Maréchal, explain things to him, and give a more pleasant tone to the conversation. But the mental tide had begun to rise, and now it was entirely carrying away the brains of Villeroy. From bad to worse was easy. The Maréchal began now to utter unmistakable insults, and the most bitter reproaches. In vain Bissy tried to silence him; representing to him how far he was wandering from the subject they came to talk upon; how indecent it was to insult a man in his own house, especially after arriving on purpose to conclude a reconciliation with him. All Bissy could

say simply had the effect of exasperating the Maréchal, and of making him vomit forth the most extravagant insults that insolence and disdain could suggest.

Dubois, stupefied and beside himself, was deprived of his tongue, could not utter a word; while Bissy, justly inflamed with anger, uselessly tried to interrupt his friend. In the midst of the sudden fire which had seized the Maréchal, he had placed himself in such a manner that he barred the passage to the door, and he continued his invectives without restraint. Tired of insults, he passed to menaces and derision, saying to Dubois that since he had now thrown off all disguise, they no longer were on terms to pardon each other, and then he assured Dubois that, sooner or later, he would do him all the injury possible, and gave him what he called good counsel.

"You are all powerful," said he; "everybody bends before you; nobody resists you; what are the greatest people in the land compared with you? Believe me, you have only one thing to do; employ all your power, put yourself at ease, and arrest me, if you dare. Who can hinder you? Arrest me, I say, you have only that course open."

Thereupon, he redoubled his challenges and his insults, like a man who is thoroughly persuaded that between arresting him and scaling Heaven there is no difference. As may well be imagined, such astounding remarks were not uttered without interruption, and warm altercations from the Cardinal de Bissy, who, nevertheless, could not stop the torrent. At last, carried away by anger and vexation, Bissy seized the Maréchal by the arm and the shoulder, and hurried him

to the door, which he opened, and then pushed him out, and followed at his heels. Dubois, more dead than alive, followed also, as well as he could—he was obliged to be on his guard against the foreign ministers who were waiting. But the three disputants vainly tried to appear composed; there was not one of the ministers who did not perceive that some violent scene must have passed in the cabinet, and forthwith Versailles was filled with this news; which was soon explained by the bragging, the explanations, the challenges, and the derisive speeches of the Maréchal de Villeroy.

I had worked and chatted for a long time with M. le Duc d'Orléans. He had passed into his wardrobe, and I was standing behind his bureau arranging his papers when I saw Cardinal Dubois enter like a whirlwind, his eyes starting out of his head. Seeing me alone, he screamed rather than asked, "Where is M. le Duc d'Orléans?" I replied that he had gone into his wardrobe, and seeing him so overturned, I asked him what was the matter.

"I am lost, I am lost!" he replied, running to the wardrobe. His reply was so loud and so sharp that M. le Duc d'Orléans, who heard it, also ran forward, so that they met each other in the doorway. They returned towards me, and the Regent asked what was the matter.

Dubois, who always stammered, could scarcely speak, so great was his rage and fear; but he succeeded at last in acquainting us with the details I have just given, although at greater length. He concluded by saying that after the insults he had re-

ceived so treacherously, and in a manner so basely premeditated, the Regent must choose between him and the Maréchal de Villeroy, for that after what had passed he could not transact any business or remain at the Court in safety and honour, while the Maréchal de Villeroy remained there!

I cannot express the astonishment into which M. le Duc d'Orléans and I were thrown. We could not believe what we had heard, but fancied we were dreaming. M. le Duc d'Orléans put several questions to Dubois, I took the liberty to do the same, in order to sift the affair to the bottom. But there was no variation in the replies of the Cardinal, furious as he was. Every moment he presented the same option to the Regent; every moment he proposed that the Cardinal de Bissy should be sent for as having witnessed everything. It may be imagined that this second scene, which I would gladly have escaped, was tolerably exciting.

The Cardinal, still insisting that the Regent must choose which of the two he sent away, M. le Duc d'Orléans asked me what I thought. I replied that I was so bewildered and so moved by this astounding occurrence that I must collect myself before speaking. The Cardinal, without addressing himself to me, but to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who he saw was plunged in embarrassment, strongly insisted that he must come to some resolution. Upon this M. le Duc d'Orléans beckoned me over, and I said to him that hitherto I had always regarded the dismissal of the Maréchal de Villeroy as a very dangerous enterprise, for reasons I had several times alleged to his Royal Highness: but

that now whatever peril there might be in undertaking it, the frightful scene that had just been enacted persuaded me that it would be much more dangerous to leave him near the King than to get rid of him altogether. I added that this was my opinion, since his Royal Highness wished to know it without giving me the time to reflect upon it with more coolness; but as for the execution, that must be well discussed before being attempted.

Whilst I spoke, the Cardinal pricked up his ears, turned his eyes upon me, sucked in all my words, and changed colour like a man who hears his doom pronounced. My opinion relieved him as much as the rage with which he was filled permitted. M. le Duc d'Orléans approved what I had just said, and the Cardinal, casting a glance upon me as of thanks, said he was the master, and must choose, but that he must choose at once, because things could not remain as they were. Finally, it was agreed that the rest of the day (it was now about twelve) and the following morning should be given to reflection upon the matter, and that the next day, at three o'clock in the afternoon, I should meet M. le Duc d'Orléans.

The next day accordingly I went to M. le Prince, whom I found with the Cardinal Dubois. M. le Duc entered a moment after, quite full of the adventure. Cardinal Dubois did not fail, though, to give him an abridged recital of it, loaded with comments and reflections. He was more his own master than on the preceding day, having had time to recover himself, and cherishing hopes that the Maréchal would be sent to the right about. It was here that I heard of the

brag of the Maréchal de Villeroy concerning the struggle he had had with Dubois, and of the challenges and insults he had uttered with a confidence which rendered his arrest more and more necessary.

After we had chatted awhile, standing, Dubois went away. M. le Duc d'Orléans sat down at his bureau, and M. le Duc and I sat in front of him. There we deliberated upon what ought to be done. After a few words of explanation from the Regent, he called upon me to give my opinion. I did so as briefly as possible, repeating what I had said on the previous day. M. le Duc d'Orléans, during my short speech, was very attentive, but with the countenance of a man much embarrassed.

As soon as I had finished, he asked M. le Duc what he thought. M. le Duc said his opinion was mine, and that if the Maréchal de Villeroy remained in his office there was nothing for it but to put the key outside the door; that was his expression. He reproduced some of the principal reasons I had alleged, supported them, and concluded by saying there was not a moment to lose. M. le Duc d'Orléans summed up a part of what had been said, and agreed that the Maréchal de Villeroy must be got rid of. M. le Duc again remarked that it must be done at once. Then we set about thinking how we could do it.

M. le Duc d'Orleans asked me my advice thereon. I said there were two things to discuss, the pretext and the execution. That a pretext was necessary, such as would convince the impartial, and be unopposed even by the friends of the Maréchal de Villeroy; that above all things we had to take care to give no

one ground for believing that the disgrace of Villeroy was the fruit of the insults he had heaped upon Cardinal Dubois; that outrageous as those insults might be, addressed to a cardinal, to a minister in possession of entire confidence, and at the head of affairs, the public, who envied him and did not like him, well remembering whence he had sprung, would consider the victim too illustrious; that the chastisement would overbalance the offence, and would be complained of; that violent resolutions, although necessary, should always have reason and appearances in their favour; that therefore I was against allowing punishment to follow too quickly upon the real offence, inasmuch as M. le Duc d'Orléans had one of the best pretexts in the world for disgracing the Maréchal, a pretext known by everybody, and which would be admitted by everybody.

I begged the Regent then to remember that he had told me several times he never had been able to speak to the King in private, or even in a whisper before others; that when he had tried, the Maréchal de Villeroy had at once come forward poking his nose between them, and declaring that while he was governor he would never suffer any one, not even his Royal Highness, to address his Majesty in a low tone, much less to speak to him in private. I said that this conduct towards the Regent, a grandson of France, and the nearest relative the King had, was insolence enough to disgust every one, and apparent as such at half a glance. I counselled M. le Duc d'Orléans to make use of this circumstance, and by its means to lay a trap for the Maréchal into which there was not the

slightest doubt he would fall. The trap was to be thus arranged. M. le Duc d'Orléans was to insist upon his right to speak to the King in private, and upon the refusal of the Maréchal to recognise it, was to adopt a new tone and make Villeroy feel he was the master. I added, in conclusion, that this snare must not be laid until everything was ready to secure its success.

When I had ceased speaking, "You have robbed me," said the Regent; "I was going to propose the same thing if you had not. What do you think of it, Monsieur?" regarding M. le Duc. That Prince strongly approved the proposition I had just made, briefly praised every part of it, and added that he saw nothing better to be done than to execute this plan very punctually.

It was agreed afterwards that no other plan could be adopted than that of arresting the Maréchal, and sending him right off at once to Villeroy, and then, after having allowed him to repose there a day or two, on account of his age, but well watched, to see if he should be sent on to Lyons or elsewhere. The manner in which he was to be arrested was to be decided at Cardinal Dubois' apartments, where the Regent begged me to go at once. I rose accordingly, and went there.

I found Dubois with one or two friends, all of whom were in the secret of this affair, as he at once told me, to put me at my ease. We soon therefore entered upon business, but it would be superfluous to relate here all that passed in this little assembly. What we resolved on was very well executed, as will

be seen. I arranged with Le Blanc, who was one of the conclave, that the instant the arrest had taken place, he should send to Meudon, and simply inquire after me; nothing more, and that by this apparently meaningless compliment, I should know that the Maréchal had been packed off.

I returned towards evening to Meudon, where several friends of Madame de Saint-Simon and of myself often slept, and where others, following the fashion established at Versailles and Paris, came to dine or sup, so that the company was always very numerous. The scene between Dubois and Villeroy was much talked about, and the latter universally blamed. Neither then nor during the ten days which elapsed before his arrest, did it enter into the head of anybody to suppose that anything worse would happen to him than general blame for his unmeasured violence, so accustomed were people to his freaks, and to the feebleness of M. le Duc d'Orléans. I was now delighted, however, to find such general confidence, which augmented that of the Maréchal, and rendered more easy the execution of our project against him; punishment he more and more deserved by the indecency and affectation of his discourses, and the audacity of his continual challenges.

Three or four days after, I went to Versailles, to see M. le Duc d'Orléans. He said that, for want of a better, and in consequence of what I had said to him on more than one occasion of the Duc de Charost, it was to him he intended to give the office of governor of the King: that he had secretly seen him: that Charost had accepted with willingness the post,

and was now safely shut up in his apartment at Versailles, seeing no one, and seen by no one, ready to be led to the King the moment the time should arrive. The Regent went over with me all the measures to be taken, and I returned to Meudon, resolved not to budge from it until they were executed, there being nothing more to arrange.

On Sunday, the 12th of August, 1722, M. le Duc d'Orléans went, towards the end of the afternoon, to work with the King, as he was accustomed to do several times each week; and as it was summer time now, he went after his airing, which he always took early. This work was to show the King by whom were to be filled up vacant places in the church, among the magistrates and intendants, &c., and to briefly explain to him the reasons which suggested the selection, and sometimes the distribution of the finances. The Regent informed him, too, of the foreign news, which was within his comprehension, before it was made public. At the conclusion of this labour, at which the Maréchal de Villeroy was always present, and sometimes M. de Fréjus (when he made bold to stop), M. le Duc d'Orléans begged the King to step into a little back cabinet, where he would say a word to him alone.

The Maréchal de Villeroy at once opposed. M. le Duc d'Orléans, who had laid this snare for him, saw him fall into it with satisfaction. He represented to the Maréchal that the King was approaching the age when he would govern by himself, that it was time for him, who was meanwhile the depository of all his authority, to inform him of things which he could

understand, and which could only be explained to him alone, whatever confidence might merit any third person. The Regent concluded by begging the Maréchal to cease to place any obstacles in the way of a thing so necessary and so important, saying that he had, perhaps, to reproach himself for,—solely out of complaisance to him,—not having commenced before.

The Maréchal, arising and stroking his wig, replied that he knew the respect he owed him, and knew also quite as well the respect he owed to the King, and to his place, charged as he was with the person of his Majesty, and being responsible for it. But he said he would not suffer his Royal Highness to speak to the King in private (because he ought to know everything said to his Majesty), still less would he suffer him to lead the King into a cabinet, out of his sight, for 'twas his (the Maréchal's) duty never to lose sight of his charge, and in everything to answer for it.

Upon this, M. le Duc d'Orléans looked fixedly at the Maréchal and said, in the tone of a master, that he mistook himself and forgot himself; that he ought to remember to whom he was speaking, and take care what words he used; that the respect he (the Regent) owed to the presence of the King, hindered him from replying as he ought to reply, and from continuing this conversation. Therefore he made a profound reverence to the King, and went away.

The Maréchal, thoroughly angry, conducted him some steps, mumbling and gesticulating; M. le Duc d'Orléans pretending to neither see nor hear him, the King astonished, and M. de Fréjus laughing in his

sleeve. The bait so well swallowed, no one doubted that the Maréchal, audacious as he was, but nevertheless servile and timid courtier, would feel all the difference between braving, bearding, and insulting Cardinal Dubois (odious to everybody, and always smelling of the vile egg from which he had been hatched) and wrestling with the Regent in the presence of the King, claiming to annihilate M. le Duc d'Orléans' rights and authority, by appealing to his own pretended rights and authority as governor of the King. People were not mistaken; less than two hours after what had occurred, it was known that the Maréchal, bragging of what he had just done, had added that he should consider himself very unhappy if M. le Duc d'Orléans thought he had been wanting in respect to him, when his only idea was to fulfil his precious duty; and that he would go the next day to have an explanation with his Royal Highness, which he doubted not would be satisfactory to him.

At every hazard, all necessary measures had been taken as soon as the day was fixed on which the snare was to be laid for the Maréchal. Nothing remained but to give form to them directly it was known that on the morrow the Maréchal would come and throw himself into the lion's mouth.

Beyond the bed-room of M. le Duc d'Orléans was a large and fine cabinet, with four big windows looking upon the garden, and on the same floor, two paces distant, two other windows, and two at the side in front of the chimney, and all these windows opened like doors. This cabinet occupied the corner where

the courtiers awaited, and behind was an adjoining cabinet, where M. le Duc d'Orléans worked and received distinguished persons or favourites who wished to talk with him.

The word was given. Artagnan, captain of the grey musketeers, was in the room (knowing what was going to happen), with many trusty officers of his company whom he had sent for, and former musketeers to be made use of at a pinch, and who clearly saw by these preparations that something important was in the wind, but without divining what. There were also some light horse posted outside these windows in the same ignorance, and many principal officers and others in the Regent's bed-room, and in the grand cabinet.

All things being well arranged, the Maréchal de Villeroy arrived about mid-day, with his accustomed hubbub, but alone, his chair and porters remaining outside, beyond the Salle des Gardes. He enters like a comedian, stops, looks round, advances some steps. Under pretext of civility, he is environed, surrounded. He asks in an authoritative tone, what M. le Duc d'Orléans is doing: the reply is, he is in his private room within.

The Maréchal elevates his tone, says that nevertheless he must see the Regent; that he is going to enter; when lo! La Fare, captain of M. le Duc d'Orléans' guards, presents himself before him, arrests him, and demands his sword. The Maréchal becomes furious, all present are in commotion. At this instant Le Blanc presents himself. His sedan chair, that had been hidden, is planted before the Maréchal. He cries

aloud, he is shaking on his lower limbs; but he is thrust into the chair, which is closed upon him and carried away in the twinkling of an eye through one of the side windows into the garden, La Fare and Artagnan each on one side of the chair, the light horse and musketeers behind, judging only by the result what was in the wind. The march is hastened; the party descend the steps of the orangery by the side of the thicket; the grand gate is found open and a coach and six before it. The chair is put down; the Maréchal storms as he will; he is cast into the coach; Artagnan mounts by his side; an officer of the musketeers is in front; and one of the gentlemen in ordinary of the King by the side of the officer; twenty musketeers, with mounted officers, surround the vehicle, and—away they go.

This side of the garden is beneath the window of the Queen's apartments (when occupied by the Infanta). This scene under the blazing noon-day sun was seen by no one, and although the large number of persons in M. le Duc d'Orléans' rooms soon dispersed, it is astonishing that an affair of this kind remained unknown more than ten hours in the château of Versailles. The servants of the Maréchal de Villeroy (to whom nobody had dared to say a word), still waited with their master's chair near the Salle des Gardes. They were told, after M. le Duc d'Orléans had seen the King, that the Maréchal had gone to Villeroy, and that they could carry to him what was necessary.

I received at Meudon the message arranged. I was sitting down to table, and it was only towards the

supper that people came from Versailles to tell us all the news, which was making much sensation there, but a sensation very measured on account of the surprise and fear caused by the manner in which the arrest had been executed.

It was no agreeable task, that which had to be performed soon after by the Regent; I mean when he carried the news of the arrest to the King. He entered into his Majesty's cabinet, which he cleared of all the company it contained, except those people whose post gave them a right to enter, but of them there were not many present. At the first word, the King reddened; his eyes moistened; he hid his face against the back of an arm-chair, without saying a word; would neither go out nor play. He ate but a few mouthfuls at supper, wept, and did not sleep all night. The morning and the dinner of the next day, the 14th, passed off but little better.

CHAPTER XXVI.

I am Sent for by Cardinal Dubois—Flight of Fréjus—He is Sought and Found—Behaviour of Villeroy in His Exile at Lyons—His Rage and Reproaches against Fréjus—Rise of the Latter in the King's Confidence.

THAT same 14th, as I rose from dinner at Meudon, with much company, the *valet de chambre* who served me said that a courier from Cardinal Dubois had a letter for me, which he had not thought good to bring me before all my guests. I opened the letter. The Cardinal conjured me to go instantly and see him at Versailles, bringing with me a trusty servant, ready to be despatched to La Trappe, as soon as I had spoken with him, and not to rack my brains to divine what this might mean, because it would be impossible to divine it, and that he was waiting with the utmost impatience to tell it to me. I at once ordered my coach, which I thought a long time in coming from the stables. They are a considerable distance from the new château I occupied.

This courier to be taken to the Cardinal, in order to be despatched to La Trappe, turned my head. I could not imagine what had happened to occupy the Cardinal so thoroughly so soon after the arrest of Villeroy. The constitution, or some important and

unknown fugitive discovered at La Trappe, and a thousand other thoughts, agitated me until I arrived at Versailles.

Upon reaching the château, I saw Dubois at a window awaiting me, and making many signs to me, and upon reaching the staircase, I found him there at the bottom, as I was about to mount. His first word was to ask me if I had brought with me a man who could post to La Trappe. I showed him my *valet de chambre,* who knew the road well, having travelled over it with me very often, and who was well known to the Cardinal, who, when simple Abbé Dubois, used very frequently to chat with him while waiting for me.

The Cardinal explained to me, as we ascended the stairs, the cause of his message. Immediately after the departure of the Maréchal de Villeroy, M. de Fréjus, the King's instructor, had been missed. He had disappeared. He had not slept at Versailles. No one knew what had become of him! The grief of the King had so much increased upon receiving this fresh blow—both his familiar friends taken from him at once—that no one knew what to do with him. He was in the most violent despair, wept bitterly, and could not be pacified. The Cardinal concluded by saying that no stone must be left unturned in order to find M. de Fréjus. That unless he had gone to Villeroy, it was probable he had hid himself in La Trappe, and that we must send and see. With this he led me to M. le Duc d'Orléans. He was alone, much troubled, walking up and down his chamber, and he said to me that he knew not what would be-

come of the King, or what to do with him; that he was crying for M. de Fréjus, and would listen to nothing; and the Regent began himself to cry out against this strange flight.

After some further consideration, Dubois pressed me to go and write to La Trappe. All was in disorder where we were; everybody spoke at once in the cabinet; it was impossible, in the midst of all this noise, to write upon the bureau, as I often did when I was alone with the King. My apartment was in the new wing, and perhaps shut up, for I was not expected that day. I went therefore, instead, into the chamber of Pezé, close at hand, and wrote my letter there. The letter finished, and I about to descend, Pezé, who had left me, returned, crying, "He is found! he is found! your letter is useless; return to M. le Duc d'Orléans."

He then related to me that just before, one of M. le Duc d'Orleans' people, who knew that Fréjus was a friend of the Lamoignons, had met Courson in the grand court, and had asked him if he knew what had become of Fréjus; that Courson had replied, "Certainly: he went last night to sleep at Basville, where the President Lamoignon is;" and that upon this, the man hurried Courson to M. le Duc d'Orléans to relate this to him.

Pezé and I arrived at M. le Duc d'Orléans' room just after Courson left it. Serenity had returned. Fréjus was well belaboured. After a moment of cheerfulness, Cardinal Dubois advised M. le Duc d'Orléans to go and carry this good news to the King, and to say that a courier should at once be

despatched to Basville, to make his preceptor return. M. le Duc d'Orléans acted upon the suggestion, saying he would return directly. I remained with Dubois awaiting him.

After having discussed a little this mysterious flight of Fréjus, Dubois told me he had news of Villeroy. He said that the Maréchal had not ceased to cry out against the outrage committed upon his person, the audacity of the Regent, the insolence of Dubois, or to hector Artagnan all the way for having lent himself to such criminal violence; then he invoked the Manes of the deceased King, bragged of his confidence in him, the importance of the place he held, and for which he had been preferred above all others; talked of the rising that so impudent an enterprise would cause in Paris, throughout the realm, and in foreign countries; deplored the fate of the young King and of all the kingdom; the officers selected by the late King for the most precious of charges, driven away, the Duc du Maine first, himself afterwards; then he burst out into exclamations and invectives; then into praises of his services, of his fidelity, of his firmness, of his inviolable attachment to his duty. In fact, he was so astonished, so troubled, so full of vexation and of rage, that he was thoroughly beside himself. The Duc de Villeroy, the Maréchal de Tallard and Biron had permission to go and see him at Villeroy: scarcely anybody else asked for it.

M. le Duc d'Orléans having returned from the King, saying that the news he had carried had much appeased his Majesty, we agreed we must so arrange matters that Fréjus should return the next morning,

that M. le Duc d'Orléans should receive him well, as though nothing had happened, and give him to understand that it was simply to avoid embarrassing him, that he had not been made aware of the secret of the arrest (explaining this to him with all the more liberty, because Fréjus hated the Maréchal, his haughtiness, his jealousy, his capriciousness, and in his heart must be delighted at his removal, and at being able to have entire possession of the King), then beg him to explain to the King the necessity of Villeroy's dismissal: then communicate to Fréjus the selection of the Duc de Charost as governor of the King; promise him all the concert and the attention from this latter he could desire; ask him to counsel and guide Charost; finally, seize the moment of the King's joy at the return of Fréjus to inform his Majesty of the new governor chosen, and to present Charost to him. All this was arranged and very well executed next day.

When the Maréchal heard of it at Villeroy, he flew into a strange passion against Charost (of whom he spoke with the utmost contempt for having accepted his place), but above all against Fréjus, whom he called a traitor and a villain! His first moments of passion, of fury, and of transport, were all the more violent, because he saw by the tranquillity reigning everywhere that his pride had deceived him in inducing him to believe that the Parliament, the markets, all Paris would rise if the Regent dared to touch a person so important and so well beloved as he imagined himself to be. This truth, which he could no longer hide from himself, and which succeeded so

rapidly to the chimeras that had been his food and his life, threw him into despair, and turned his head. He fell foul of the Regent, of his minister, of those employed to arrest him, of those who had failed to defend him, of all who had not risen in revolt to bring him back in triumph, of Charost, who ha dared to succeed him, and especially of Fréjus, who had deceived him in such an unworthy manner. Fréjus was the person against whom he was the most irritated. Reproaches of ingratitude and of treachery rained unceasingly upon him; all that the Maréchal had done for him with the deceased King was recollected; how he had protected, aided, lodged, and fed him; how without him (Villeroy) he (Fréjus) would never have been preceptor of the King; and all this was exactly true.

The treachery to which he alluded he afterwards explained. He said that he and Fréjus had agreed at the very commencement of the regency to act in union; and that if by troubles or events impossible to foresee, but which were only too common in regencies, one of them should be dismissed from office, the other not being able to hinder the dismissal, though not touched himself, should at once withdraw and never return to his post, until the first was reinstated in his. And after these explanations, new cries broke out against the perfidy of this miserable wretch—(for the most odious terms ran glibly from the end of his tongue)—who thought like a fool to cover his perfidy with a veil of gauze, in slipping off to Basville, so as to be instantly sought and brought back, in fear lest he should lose his place by the slightest resistance or

the slightest delay, and who expected to acquit himself thus of his word, and of the reciprocal engagement both had taken; and then he returned to fresh insults and fury against this serpent, as he said, whom he had warmed and nourished so many years in his bosom.

The account of these transports and insults, promptly came from Villeroy to Versailles, brought, not only by the people whom the Regent had placed as guards over the Maréchal, and to give an exact account of all he said and did, day by day, but by all the domestics who came and went, and before whom Villeroy launched out his speeches, at table, while passing through his ante-chambers, or while taking a turn in his gardens.

All this weighed heavily upon Fréjus by the rebound. Despite the apparent tranquillity of his visage, he appeared confounded. He replied by a silence of respect and commiseration in which he enveloped himself; nevertheless, he could not do so to the Duc de Villeroy, the Maréchal de Tallard, and a few others. He tranquilly said to them, that he had done all he could to fulfil an engagement which he did not deny, but that after having thus satisfied the call of honour, he did not think he could refuse to obey orders so express from the King and the Regent, or abandon the former in order to bring about the return of the Maréchal de Villeroy, which was the object of their reciprocal engagement, and which he was certain he could not effect by absence, however prolonged. But amidst these very sober excuses could be seen the joy which peeped forth from him, in spite of him-

self, at being freed from so inconvenient a superior, at having to do with a new governor whom he could easily manage, at being able when he chose to guide himself in all liberty towards the grand object he had always desired, which was to attach himself to the King without reserve, and to make out of this attachment, obtained by all sorts of means, the means of a greatness which he did not yet dare to figure to himself, but which time and opportunity would teach him how to avail himself of in the best manner, marching to it meanwhile in perfect security.

The Maréchal was allowed to refresh himself, and exhale his anger five or six days at Villeroy; and as he was not dangerous away from the King, he was sent to Lyons, with liberty to exercise his functions of governor of the town and province, measures being taken to keep a watch upon him, and Des Libois being left with him to diminish his authority by this manifestation of precaution and surveillance, which took from him all appearance of credit. He would receive no honours on arriving there. A large quantity of his first fire was extinguished; this wide separation from Paris and the Court, where not even the slightest movement had taken place, everybody being stupefied and in terror at an arrest of this importance; took from him all remaining hope, curbed his impetuosity, and finally induced him to conduct himself with sagacity in order to avoid worse treatment.

Such was the catastrophe of a man, so incapable of all the posts he had occupied, who displayed chimeras and audacity in the place of prudence and sagacity, who everywhere appeared a trifler and a comedian,

and whose universal and profound ignorance (except of the meanest arts of the courtier) made plainly visible the thin covering of probity and of virtue with which he tried to hide his ingratitude, his mad ambition, his desire to overturn all in order to make himself the chief of all, in the midst of his weakness and his fears, and to hold a helm he was radically incapable of managing. I speak here only of his conduct since the establishment of the regency. Elsewhere, in more than one place, the little or nothing he was worth has been shown; how his ignorance and his jealousy lost us Flanders, and nearly ruined the State; how his felicity was pushed to the extreme, and what deplorable reverses followed his return. Sufficient to say that he never recovered from the state into which this last madness threw him, and that the rest of his life was only bitterness, regret, contempt! He had persuaded the King that it was he, alone, who by vigilance and precaution had preserved his life from poison that others wished to administer to him. This was the source of those tears shed by the King when Villeroy was carried off, and of his despair when Fréjus disappeared. He did not doubt that both had been removed in order that this crime might be more easily committed.

The prompt return of Fréjus dissipated the half of his fear, the continuance of his good health delivered him by degrees from the other. The preceptor, who had a great interest in preserving the King, and who felt much relieved by the absence of Villeroy, left nothing undone in order to extinguish these gloomy ideas; and consequently to let blame fall upon

him who had inspired them. He feared the return of the Maréchal when the King, who was approaching his majority, should be the master; once delivered of the yoke he did not wish it to be reimposed upon him. He well knew that the grand airs, the ironies, the authoritative fussiness in public of the Maréchal were insupportable to his Majesty, and that they held together only by those frightful ideas of poison. To destroy them was to show the Maréchal uncovered, and worse than that to show to the King, without appearing to make a charge against the Maréchal, the criminal interest he had in exciting these alarms, and the falsehood and atrocity of such a venomous invention. These reflections, which the health of the King each day confirmed, sapped all esteem, all gratitude, and left his Majesty in full liberty of conscience to prohibit, when he should be the master, all approach to his person on the part of so vile and so interested an impostor.

Fréjus made use of these means to shelter himself against the possibility of the Maréchal's return, and to attach himself to the King without reserve. The prodigious success of his schemes has been only too well felt since.

The banishment of Villeroy, flight and return of Fréjus, and installation of Charost as governor of the King, were followed by the confirmation of his Majesty by the Cardinal de Rohan, and by his first communion, administered to him by this self-same Cardinal, his grand almoner.

CHAPTER XXVII.

I Retire from Public Life—Illness and Death of Dubois—Account of His Riches—His Wife—His Character—Anecdotes—Madame de Conflans—Relief of the Regent and the King.

VILLEROY being banished, the last remaining obstacle in Dubois' path was removed. There was nothing, now, to hinder him from being proclaimed prime minister. I had opposed it as stoutly as I could; but my words were lost upon M. le Duc d'Orléans. Accordingly, about two o'clock in the afternoon of the 23rd of August, 1722, Dubois was declared prime minister by the Regent, and by the Regent at once conducted to the King as such.

After this event I began insensibly to withdraw from public affairs. Before the end of the year the King was consecrated at Rheims. The disorder at the ceremony was inexpressible. All precedent was forgotten. Rank was hustled and jostled, so to speak, by the crowd. The desire to exclude the nobility from all office and all dignity was obvious, at half a glance. My spirit was ulcerated at this; I saw approaching the complete re-establishment of the bastards; my heart was cleft in twain, to see the Regent at the heels of his unworthy minister. He was a

prey to the interest, the avarice, the folly, of this miserable wretch, and no remedy possible. Whatever experience I might have had of the astonishing weakness of M. le Duc d'Orléans, it had passed all bounds when I saw him with my own eyes make Dubois prime minister, after all I had said to him on the subject,—after all he had said to me. The year 1723 commenced, and found me in this spirit. It is at the end of this year I have determined to end those memoirs, and the details of it will not be so full or so abundant as of preceding years. I was hopelessly wearied with M. le Duc d'Orléans; I no longer approached this poor prince (with so many great and useless talents buried in him)—except with repugnance. I could not help feeling for him what the poor Israelites said to themselves in the desert about the manna: "*Nauscat anima mea super cibum istum levissimum.*" I no longer deigned to speak to him. He perceived this: I felt he was pained at it; he strove to reconcile me to him, without daring, however, to speak of affairs, except briefly, and with constraint, and yet he could not hinder himself from speaking of them. I scarcely took the trouble to reply to him, and I cut his conversation as short as possible. I abridged and curtailed my audiences with him; I listened to his reproaches with coldness. In fact, what had I to discuss with a Regent who was no longer one, not even over himself, still less over a realm plunged in disorder?

Cardinal Dubois, when he met me, almost courted me. He knew not how to catch me. The bonds which united me to M. le Duc d'Orléans had always

been so strong that the prime minister, who knew their strength, did not dare to flatter himself he could break them. His resource was to try to disgust me by inducing his master to treat me with a reserve which was completely new to him, and which cost him more than it cost me; for, in fact, he had often found my confidence very useful to him, and had grown accustomed to it. As for me, I dispensed with his friendship more than willingly, vexed at being no longer able to gather any fruit from it for the advantage of the State or himself, wholly abandoned as he was to his Paris pleasures and to his minister. The conviction of my complete inutility more and more kept me in the background, without the slightest suspicion that different conduct could be dangerous to me, or that, weak and abandoned to Dubois, as was the Regent, the former could ever exile me, like the Duc de Noailles, and Canillac, or disgust me into exiling myself. I followed, then, my accustomed life. That is to say, never saw M. le Duc d'Orléans except *tête-à-tête,* and then very seldom at intervals that each time grew longer, coldly, briefly, never talking to him of business, or, if he did to me, turning the conversation, and replying in a manner to make it drop. Acting thus, it is easy to see that I was mixed up in nothing, and what I shall have to relate now will have less of the singularity and instructiveness of good and faithful memoirs, than of the dryness and sterility of the gazettes.

First of all I will finish my account of Cardinal Dubois. I have very little more to say of him; for he had scarcely begun to enjoy his high honours when

Death came to laugh at him for the sweating labour he had taken to acquire them.

On the 11th of June, 1723, the King went to reside at Meudon, ostensibly in order that the château of Versailles might be cleared—in reality, to accommodate Cardinal Dubois. He had just presided over the assembly of the day, and flattered to the last degree at this, wished to repose upon the honour. He desired, also, to be present sometimes at the assemblies of the Company of the Indies. Meudon brought him half-way to Paris, and saved him a journey. His debauchery had so shattered his health that the movement of a coach gave him pains which he very carefully hid.

The King held at Meudon a review of his household, which in his pride the Cardinal must needs attend. It cost him dear. He mounted on horseback the better to enjoy his triumph; he suffered cruelly, and became so violently ill that he was obliged to have assistance. The most celebrated doctors and physicians were called in, with great secrecy. They shook their heads, and came so often that news of the illness began to transpire. Dubois was unable to go to Paris again more than once or twice, and then with much trouble, and solely to conceal his malady, which gave him no repose.

He left nothing undone, in fact, to hide it from the world; he went as often as he could to the council; apprised the ambassadors he would go to Paris, and did not go; kept himself invisible at home, and bestowed the most frightful abuse upon everybody who dared to intrude upon him. On Saturday, the 7th

of August, he was so ill that the doctors declared he must submit to an operation, which was very urgent, and without which he could hope to live but a few days; because the abscess he had having burst the day he mounted on horseback, gangrene had commenced, with an overflow of pus, and he must be transported, they added, to Versailles, in order to undergo this operation. The trouble this terrible announcement caused him, so overthrew him that he could not be moved the next day, Sunday, the 8th; but on Monday he was transported in a litter, at five o'clock in the morning.

After having allowed him to repose himself a little, the doctors and surgeons proposed that he should receive the sacrament, and submit to the operation immediately after. This was not heard very peacefully; he had scarcely ever been free from fury since the day of the review; he had grown worse on Saturday, when the operation was first announced to him. Nevertheless, some little time after, he sent for a priest from Versailles, with whom he remained alone about a quarter of an hour. Such a great and good man, so well prepared for death, did not need more. Prime ministers, too, have privileged confessions. As his chamber again filled, it was proposed that he should take the viaticum; he cried out that that was soon said, but that there was a ceremonial for the cardinals, of which he was ignorant, and Cardinal Bissy must be sent to, at Paris, for information upon it. Everybody looked at his neighbour, and felt that Dubois merely wished to gain time; but as the operation was urgent, they proposed it to him without fur-

ther delay. He furiously sent them away, and would no longer hear talk of it.

The faculty, who saw the imminent danger of the slightest delay, sent to Meudon for M. le Duc d'Orléans, who instantly came in the first conveyance he could lay his hands on. He exhorted the Cardinal to suffer the operation; then asked the faculty if it could be performed in safety. They replied that they could say nothing for certain, but that assuredly the Cardinal had not two hours to live if he did not instantly agree to it. M. le Duc d'Orléans returned to the sick man, and begged him so earnestly to do so, that he consented.

The operation was accordingly performed about five o'clock, and in five minutes, by La Peyronie, chief surgeon of the King, and successor to Maréchal, who was present with Chirac and others of the most celebrated surgeons and doctors. The Cardinal cried and stormed strongly. M. le Duc d'Orléans returned into the chamber directly after the operation was performed, and the faculty did not dissimulate from him that, judging by the nature of the wound, and what had issued from it, the Cardinal had not long to live. He died, in fact, twenty-four hours afterwards, on the 10th of August, at five o'clock in the morning, grinding his teeth against his surgeons and against Chirac, whom he had never ceased to abuse.

Extreme unction was, however, brought to him. Of the communion, nothing more was said—or of any priest for him—and he finished his life thus, in the utmost despair, and enraged at quitting it. Fortune had nicely played with him; she made him dearly

and slowly buy her favours by all sorts of trouble, care, projects, intrigues, fears, labour, torment; and at last showered down upon him torrents of greater power, unmeasured riches, to let him enjoy them only four years (dating from the time when he was made Secretary of State, and only two years dating from the time when he was made Cardinal and Prime Minister), and then snatched them from him, in the smiling moment when he was most enjoying them, at sixty-six years of age.

He died thus, absolute master of his master, less a prime minister than an all-powerful minister, exercising in full and undisturbed liberty the authority and the power of the King; he was superintendent of the post, Cardinal, Archbishop of Cambrai, had seven abbeys, with respect to which he was insatiable to the last; and he had set on foot overtures in order to seize upon those of Citeaux, Prémonté, and others, and it was averred that he received a pension from England of 40,000 livres sterling! I had the curiosity to ascertain his revenue, and I have thought what I found curious enough to be inserted here, diminishing some of the benefices to avoid all exaggeration. I have made a reduction, too, upon what he drew from his place of prime minister, and that of the post. I believe, also, that he had 20,000 livres from the clergy, as Cardinal, but I do not know it as certain. What he drew from Law was immense. He had made use of a good deal of it at Rome, in order to obtain his Cardinalship; but a prodigious sum of ready cash was left in his hands. He had an extreme quantity of the most beautiful plate in silver

and enamel, most admirably worked; the richest furniture, the rarest jewels of all kinds, the finest and rarest horses of all countries, and the most superb equipages. His table was in every way exquisite and superb, and he did the honours of it very well, although extremely sober by nature and by régime.

The place of preceptor of M. le Duc d'Orléans had procured for him the Abbey of Nogent-sous-Coucy; the marriage of the Prince that of Saint-Just; his first journeys to Hanover and England, those of Airvause and of Bourgueil: three other journeys, his omnipotence. What a monster of Fortune! With what a commencement, and with what an end!

ACCOUNT OF HIS RICHES.

Cambrai	120,000	livres
Nogent-sous-Coucy	10,000	"
Saint-Just	10,000	"
Airvause	12,000	"
Bourgueil	12,000	"
Berg-Saint-Vinox	60,000	"
Saint-Bertin	80,000	"
Cercamp	20,000	"
	324,000	"
Prime Minister	150,000	"
The Post	100,000	"
	250,000	"
The Pension from England, at 24 livres the livre sterling	960,000	"

TOTALS.

Benefices	324,000	"
Prime Minister and Post	250,000	"
Pension from England	960,000	"
	1,534,000	"

On Wednesday evening, the day after his death, Dubois was carried from Versailles to the church of the chapter of Saint-Honoré, in Paris, where he was interred some days after. Each of the academies of which he was a member had a service performed for him (at which they were present), the assembly of the clergy had another (he being their president), and as prime minister he had one at Notre Dame, at which the Cardinal de Noailles officiated, and at which the superior courts were present. There was no funeral oration at any of them. It could not be hazarded. His brother, more modest than he, and an honest man, kept the office of secretary of the cabinet, which he had, and which the Cardinal had given him. This brother found an immense heritage. He had but one son, canon of Saint-Honoré, who had never desired places or livings, and who led a good life. He would touch scarcely anything of this rich succession. He employed a part of it in building for his uncle a sort of mausoleum (fine, but very modest, against the wall, at the end of the church, where the Cardinal is interred, with a Christian-like inscription), and distributed the rest to the poor, fearing lest this money should bring a curse upon him.

It was found some time after his death that the Cardinal had been long married, but very obscurely! He paid his wife to keep silent when he received his benefices; but when he dawned into greatness became much embarrassed with her. He was always in agony lest she should come forward and ruin him. His marriage had been made in Limousin, and celebrated in a village church. When he was named Archbishop

of Cambrai he resolved to destroy the proofs of this marriage, and employed Breteuil, Intendant of Limoges, to whom he committed the secret, to do this for him skilfully and quietly.

Breteuil saw the heavens open before him if he could but succeed in this enterprise, so delicate and so important. He had intelligence, and knew how to make use of it. He goes to this village where the marriage had been celebrated, accompanied by only two or three valets, and arranges his journey so as to arrive at night, stops at the curé's house, in default of an inn, familiarly claims hospitality like a man surprised by the night, dying of hunger and thirst, and unable to go a step further.

The good curé, transported with gladness to lodge M. l'Intendant, hastily prepared all there was in the house, and had the honour of supping with him, whilst his servant regaled the two valets in another room, Breteuil having sent them all away in order to be alone with his host. Breteuil liked his glass and knew how to empty it. He pretended to find the supper good and the wine better. The curé, charmed with his guest, thought only of egging him on, as they say in the provinces. The tankard was on the table, and was drained again and again with a familiarity which transported the worthy priest. Breteuil, who had laid his project, succeeded in it, and made the good man so drunk that he could not keep upright, or see, or utter a word. When Breteuil had brought him to this state, and had finished him off with a few more draughts of wine, he profited by the information he had extracted from him during the first

quarter of an hour of supper. He had asked if his registers were in good order, and how far they extended, and under pretext of safety against thieves, asked him where he kept them, and the keys of them, so that the moment Breteuil was certain the curé could no longer make use of his senses, he took his keys, opened the cupboard, took from it the register of the marriage of the year he wanted, very neatly detached the page he sought (and woe unto that marriage registered upon the same page), put it in his pocket, replaced the registers where he had found them, locked up the cupboard, and put back the keys in the place he had taken them from. His only thought after this was to steal off as soon as the dawn appeared, leaving the good curé snoring away the effects of the wine, and giving some pistoles to the servant.

He went thence to the notary, who had succeeded to the business, and the papers of the one who had made the contract of marriage; locked himself up with him, and by force and authority made him give up the minutes of the marriage contract. He sent afterwards for the wife of Dubois (from whose hands the wily Cardinal had already obtained the copy of the contract she possessed), threatened her with dreadful dungeons if she ever dared to breathe a word of her marriage, and promised marvels to her if she kept silent.

He assured her, moreover, that all she could say or do would be thrown away, because everything had been so arranged that she could prove nothing, and that if she dared to speak, preparations were made for

condemning her as a calumniator and impostor, to rot with a shaven head in the prison of a convent! Breteuil placed these two important documents in the hands of Dubois, and was (to the surprise and scandal of all the world) recompensed, some time after, with the post of war secretary, which, apparently, he had done nothing to deserve, and for which he was utterly unqualified. The secret reason of his appointment was not discovered until long after.

Dubois' wife did not dare to utter a whisper. She came to Paris after the death of her husband. A good proportion was given to her of what was left. She lived obscure, but in easy circumstances, and died at Paris more than twenty years after the Cardinal Dubois, by whom she had had no children. The brother lived on very good terms with her. He was a village doctor when Dubois sent for him to Paris. In the end this history was known, and has been neither contradicted nor disavowed by anybody.

We have many examples of prodigious fortune acquired by insignificant people, but there is no example of a person so destitute of all talent (excepting that of low intrigue), as was Cardinal Dubois, being thus fortunate. His intellect was of the most ordinary kind; his knowledge the most common-place; his capacity nil; his exterior that of a ferret, of a pedant; his conversation disagreeable, broken, always uncertain; his falsehood written upon his forehead; his habits too measureless to be hidden; his fits of impetuosity resembling fits of madness; his head incapable of containing more than one thing at a time, and he incapable of following anything but his per-

sonal interest; nothing was sacred with him; he had no sort of worthy intimacy with any one; had a declared contempt for faith, promises, honour, probity, truth; took pleasure at laughing at all these things; was equally voluptuous and ambitious, wishing to be all in all in everything; counting himself alone as everything, and whatever was not connected with him as nothing; and regarding it as the height of madness to think or act otherwise. With all this he was soft, cringing, supple, a flatterer, and false admirer, taking all shapes with the greatest facility, and playing the most opposite parts in order to arrive at the different ends he proposed to himself; and nevertheless was but little capable of seducing. His judgment acted by fits and starts, was involuntarily crooked, with little sense or clearness; he was disagreeable in spite of himself. Nevertheless, he could be funnily vivacious when he wished, but nothing more, could tell a good story, spoiled, however, to some extent by his stuttering, which his falsehood had turned into a habit from the hesitation he always had in replying and in speaking. With such defects it is surprising that the only man he was able to seduce was M. le Duc d'Orléans, who had so much intelligence, such a well-balanced mind, and so much clear and rapid perception of character. Dubois gained upon him as a child while his preceptor; he seized upon him as a young man by favouring his liking for liberty, sham fashionable manners and debauchery, and his disdain of all rule. He ruined his heart, his mind, and his habits, by instilling into him the principles of libertinism, which this poor prince could no more

deliver himself from than from those ideas of reason, truth, and conscience which he always took care to stifle.

Dubois having insinuated himself into the favour of his master in this manner, was incessantly engaged in studying how to preserve his position. He never lost sight of his prince, whose great talents and great defects he had learnt how to profit by. The Regent's feebleness was the main rock upon which he built. As for Dubois' talent and capacity, as I have before said, they were worth nothing. All his success was due to his servile pliancy and base intrigues.

When he became the real master of the State he was just as incompetent as before. All his application was directed towards his master, and it had for sole aim that that master should not escape him. He wearied himself in watching all the movements of the prince, what he did, whom he saw, and for how long; his humour, his visage, his remarks at the issue of every audience and of every party; who took part in them, what was said and by whom, combining all these things; above all, he strove to frighten everybody from approaching the Regent, and kept no bounds with any one who had the temerity to do so without his knowledge and permission. This watching occupied all his days, and by it he regulated all his movements. This application, and the orders he was obliged to give for appearance sake, occupied all his time, so that he became inaccessible except for a few public audiences, or for others to the foreign ministers. Yet the majority of those ministers never

could catch him, and were obliged to lie in wait for him upon staircases or in passages, where he did not expect to meet them. Once he threw into the fire a prodigious quantity of unopened letters, and then congratulated himself upon having got rid of all his business at once. At his death thousands of letters were found unopened.

Thus everything was in arrear, and nobody, not even the foreign ministers, dared to complain to M. le Duc d'Orléans, who, entirely abandoned to his pleasures, and always on the road from Versailles to Paris, never thought of business, only too satisfied to find himself so free, and attending to nothing except the few trifles he submitted to the King under the pretence of working with his Majesty. Thus, nothing could be settled, and all was in chaos. To govern in this manner there is no need for capacity. Two words to each minister charged with a department, and some care in garnishing the councils attended by the King, with the least important despatches (settling the others with M. le Duc d'Orléans) constituted all the labour of the prime minister; and spying, scheming, parade, flatteries, defence, occupied all his time. His fits of passion, full of insults and blackguardism, from which neither man nor woman, no matter of what rank, was sheltered, relieved him from an infinite number of audiences, because people preferred going to subalterns, or neglecting their business altogether, to exposing themselves to this fury and these affronts.

The mad freaks of Dubois, especially when he had become master, and thrown off all restraint, would

fill a volume. I will relate only one or two as samples. His frenzy was such that he would sometimes run all round the chamber, upon the tables and chairs, without touching the floor! M. le Duc d'Orléans told me that he had often witnessed this.

Another sample:—

The Cardinal de Gesvres came over to-day to complain to M. le Duc d'Orléans that the Cardinal Dubois had dismissed him in the most filthy terms. On a former occasion, Dubois had treated the Princesse de Montauban in a similar manner, and M. le Duc d'Orléans had replied to her complaints as he now replied to those of the Cardinal de Gesvres. He told the Cardinal, who was a man of good manners, of gravity, and of dignity (whereas the Princess deserved what she got) that he had always found the counsel of the Cardinal Dubois good, and that he thought he (Gesvres) would do well to follow the advice just given him! Apparently it was to free himself from similar complaints that he spoke thus; and, in fact, he had no more afterwards.

Another sample:—

Madame de Cheverny, become a widow, had retired to the Ineurables. Her place of governess of the daughters of M. le Duc d'Orléans had been given to Madame de Conflans. A little while after Dubois was consecrated, Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans asked Madame de Conflans if she had called upon him. Thereupon Madame de Conflans replied negatively, and that she saw no reason for going, the place she held being so little mixed up in State affairs. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans pointed out

how intimate the Cardinal was with M. le Duc d'Orléans. Madame de Conflans still tried to back out, saying that he was a madman, who insulted everybody, and to whom she would not expose herself. She had wit and a tongue, and was supremely vain, although very polite. Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans burst out laughing at her fear, and said, that having nothing to ask of the Cardinal, but simply to render an account to him of the office M. le Duc d'Orléans had given her, it was an act of politeness which could only please him, and obtain for her his regard, far from having anything disagreeable, or to be feared about it; and finished by saying to her that it was proper, and that she wished her to go.

She went, therefore, for it was at Versailles, and arrived in a large cabinet, where there were eight or ten persons waiting to speak to the Cardinal, who was larking with one of his favourites, by the mantelpiece. Fear seized upon Madame de Conflans, who was little, and who appeared less. Nevertheless, she approached as this woman retired. The Cardinal, seeing her advance, sharply asked her what she wanted.

"Monseigneur," said she,—"Oh, Monseigneur!"

"Monseigneur," interrupted the Cardinal, "I can't now."

"But, Monseigneur," replied she,—

"Now, devil take me, I tell you again," interrupted the Cardinal, "when I say I can't, I can't."

"Monseigneur," Madame de Conflans again said, in order to explain that she wanted nothing; but at this word the Cardinal seized her by the shoulders, and pushed her out, saying,

"Go to the devil, and let me alone."

She nearly fell over, flew away in fury, weeping hot tears, and reached, in this state, Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, to whom, through her sobs, she related the adventure.

People were so accustomed to the insults of the Cardinal, and this was thought so singular and so amusing, that the recital of it caused shouts of laughter, which finished off poor Madame de Conflans, who swore that, never in her life, would she put foot in the house of this madman.

The Easter Sunday after he was made Cardinal, Dubois woke about eight o'clock, rang his bells as though he would break them, called for his people with the most horrible blasphemies, vomited forth a thousand filthy expressions and insults, raved at everybody because he had not been awakened, said that he wanted to say mass, but knew not how to find time, occupied as he was. After this very beautiful preparation, he very wisely abstained from saying mass, and I don't know whether he ever did say it after his consecration.

He had taken for private secretary one Verrier, whom he had unfrocked from the Abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, the business of which he had conducted for twenty years, with much cleverness and intelligence. He soon accommodated himself to the humours of the Cardinal, and said to him all he pleased.

One morning he was with the Cardinal, who asked for something that could not at once be found. Thereupon Dubois began to blaspheme, to storm

against his clerks, saying that if he had not enough he would engage twenty, thirty, fifty, a hundred, and making the most frightful din. Verrier tranquilly listened to him. The Cardinal asked him if it was not a terrible thing to be so ill-served, considering the expense he was put to; then broke out again, and pressed him to reply.

"Monseigneur," said Verrier, "engage one more clerk, and give him, for sole occupation, to swear and storm for you, and all will go well; you will have much more time to yourself and will be better served."

The Cardinal burst out laughing, and was appeased.

Every evening he ate an entire chicken for his supper. I know not by whose carelessness, but this chicken was forgotten one evening by his people. As he was about to go to bed he bethought him of his bird, rang, cried out, stormed against his servants, who ran and coolly listened to him. Upon this he cried the more, and complained of not having been served. He was astonished when they replied to him that he had eaten his chicken, but that if he pleased they would put another down to the spit.

"What!" said he, "I have eaten my chicken!" The bold and cool assertion of his people persuaded him, and they laughed at him.

I will say no more, because, I repeat it, volumes might be filled with these details. I have said enough to show what was this monstrous personage, whose death was a relief to great and little, to all Europe, even to his brother, whom he treated like

a negro. He wanted to dismiss a groom on one occasion for having lent one of his coaches to this same brother, to go somewhere in Paris.

The most relieved of all was M. le Duc d'Orléans. For a long time he had groaned in secret beneath the weight of a domination so harsh, and of chains he had forged for himself. Not only he could no longer dispose or decide upon anything, but he could get the Cardinal to do nothing, great or small, he desired done. He was obliged, in everything, to follow the will of the Cardinal, who became furious, reproached him, and stormed at him when too much contradicted. The poor Prince felt thus the abandonment into which he had cast himself, and, by this abandonment, the power of the Cardinal, and the eclipse of his own power. He feared him; Dubois had become insupportable to him; he was dying with desire, as was shown in a thousand things, to get rid of him, but he dared not—he did not know how to set about it; and, isolated and unceasingly wretched as he was, there was nobody to whom he could unbosom himself; and the Cardinal, well informed of this, increased his freaks, so as to retain by fear what he had usurped by artifice, and what he no longer hoped to preserve in any other way.

As soon as Dubois was dead, M. le Duc d'Orléans returned to Meudon, to inform the King of the event. The King immediately begged him to charge himself with the management of public affairs, declared him prime minister, and received, the next day, his oath, the patent of which was immediately sent to the Parliament, and verified. This prompt declaration was

caused by the fear Fréjus had to see a private person prime minister. The King liked M. le Duc d'Orléans, as we have already seen by the respect he received from him, and by his manner of working with him. The Regent, without danger of being taken at his word, always left him master of all favours, and of the choice of persons he proposed to him; and, besides, never bothered him, or allowed business to interfere with his amusements. In spite of all the care and all the suppleness Dubois had employed in order to gain the spirit of the King, he never could succeed, and people remarked, without having wonderful eyes, a very decided repugnance of the King for him. The Cardinal was afflicted, but redoubled his efforts, in the hope at last of success. But, in addition to his own disagreeable manners, heightened by the visible efforts he made to please, he had two enemies near the King, very watchful to keep him away from the young prince—the Maréchal de Villeroy, while he was there, and Fréjus, who was much more dangerous, and who was resolved to overthrow him. Death, as we have seen, spared him the trouble.

The Court returned from Meudon to Paris on the 13th of August. Soon after I met M. le Duc d'Orléans there.

As soon as he saw me enter his cabinet he ran to me, and eagerly asked me if I meant to abandon him. I replied that while his Cardinal lived I felt I should be useless to him, but that now this obstacle was removed, I should always be very humbly at his service. He promised to live with me on the same terms as before, and, without a word upon the

Cardinal, began to talk about home and foreign affairs. If I flattered myself that I was to be again of use to him for any length of time, events soon came to change the prospect. But I will not anticipate my story.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Death of Lausun—His Extraordinary Adventures—His Success at Court — Appointment to the Artillery — Counterworked by Louvois—Lausun and Madame de Montespan—Scene with the King—Mademoiselle and Madame de Monaco.

THE Duc de Lausun died on the 19th of November, at the age of ninety years and six months. The intimate union of the two sisters I and he had espoused, and our continual intercourse at the Court (at Marly, we had a pavilion especially for us four), caused me to be constantly with him, and after the King's death we saw each other nearly every day at Paris, and unceasingly frequented each other's table. He was so extraordinary a personage, in every way so singular, that La Bruyère, with much justice, says of him in his "Characters," that others were not allowed to dream as he had lived. For those who saw him in his old age, this description seems even more just. That is what induces me to dwell upon him here. He was of the House of Caumont, the branch of which represented by the Ducs de la Force has always passed for the eldest, although that of Lausun has tried to dispute with it.

The mother of M. de Lausun was daughter of the Duc de la Force, son of the second Maréchal Duc de la

Force, and brother of the Maréchale de Turenne, but by another marriage; the Maréchale was by a first marriage. The father of M. de Lausun was the Comte de Lausun, cousin-german of the first Maréchal Duc de Grammont, and of the old Comte de Grammont.

M. de Lausun was a little fair man, of good figure, with a noble and expressively commanding face, but which was without charm, as I have heard people say who knew him when he was young. He was full of ambition, of caprice, of fancies; jealous of all; wishing always to go too far; never content with anything; had no reading, a mind in no way cultivated, and without charm; naturally sorrowful, fond of solitude, uncivilised; very noble in his dealings, disagreeable and malicious by nature, still more so by jealousy and by ambition; nevertheless, a good friend when a friend at all, which was rare; a good relative; enemy even of the indifferent; hard upon faults, and upon what was ridiculous, which he soon discovered; extremely brave, and as dangerously bold. As a courtier he was equally insolent and satirical, and as cringing as a valet; full of foresight, perseverance, intrigue, and meanness, in order to arrive at his ends; with this, dangerous to the ministers; at the Court feared by all, and full of witty and sharp remarks which spared nobody.

He came very young to the Court without any fortune, a cadet of Gascony, under the name of the Marquis de Puyguilhem. The Maréchal de Grammont, cousin-german of his brother, lodged him. Grammont was then in high consideration at the Court,

enjoyed the confidence of the Queen-mother, and of Cardinal Mazarin, and had the regiment of the guards and the reversion of it for the Comte de Guiche, his eldest son, who, the prince of brave fellows, was on his side in great favour with the ladies, and far advanced in the good graces of the King and of the Comtesse de Soissons, niece of the Cardinal, whom the King never quitted, and who was the Queen of the Court. This Comte de Guiche introduced to the Comtesse de Soissons the Marquis de Puyguilhem, who in a very little time became the King's favourite. The King, in fact, gave him his regiment of dragoons on forming it, and soon after made him Maréchal de Camp, and created for him the post of colonel-general of dragoons.

The Duc de Mazarin, who in 1669 had already retired from the Court, wished to get rid of his post of grand master of the artillery; Puyguilhem had scent of his intention, and asked the King for this office. The King promised it to him, but on condition that he kept the matter secret some days. The day arrived on which the King had agreed to declare him. Puyguilhem, who had the *entrées* of the first gentleman of the chamber (which are also named the *grandes entrées*), went to wait for the King (who was holding a finance council), in a room that nobody entered during the council, between that in which all the Court waited, and that in which the council itself was held. He found there no one but Nyert, chief *valet de chambre,* who asked him how he happened to come there. Puyguilhem, sure of his affair, thought he should make a friend of this valet

by confiding to him what was about to take place. Nyert expressed him joy; then drawing out his watch, said he should have time to go and execute a pressing commission the King had given him. He mounted four steps at a time the little staircase, at the head of which was the bureau where Louvois worked all day—for at Saint-Germain the lodgings were little and few—and the ministers and nearly all the Court lodged each at his own house in the town. Nyert entered the bureau of Louvois, and informed him that upon leaving the council (of which Louvois was not a member), the King was going to declare Puyguilhem grand master of the artillery, adding that he had just learned this news from Puyguilhem himself, and saying where he had left him.

Louvois hated Puyguilhem, friend of Colbert, his rival, and he feared his influence in a post which had so many intimate relations with his department of the war, the functions and authority of which he invaded as much as possible, a proceeding which he felt Puyguilhem was not the kind of man to suffer. He embraces Nyert, thanking him, dismisses him as quickly as possible, takes some papers to serve as an excuse, descends, and finds Puyguilhem and Nyert in the chamber, as above described. Nyert pretends to be surprised to see Louvois arrive, and says to him that the council has not broken up.

"No matter," replied Louvois, "I must enter. I have something important to say to the King;" and thereupon he enters. The King, surprised to see him, asks what brings him there, rises, and goes to him. Louvois draws him into the embrasure of a window,

and says he knows that his Majesty is going to declare Puyguilhem grand master of the artillery; that he is waiting in the adjoining room for the breaking up of the council; that his Majesty is fully master of his favours and of his choice, but that he (Louvois) thinks it his duty to represent to him the incompatibility between Puyguilhem and him, his caprices, his pride; that he will wish to change everything in the artillery; that this post has such intimate relations with the war department, that continual quarrels will arise between the two, with which his Majesty will be importuned at every moment.

The King is piqued to see his secret known by him from whom, above all, he wished to hide it; he replies to Louvois, with a very serious air, that the appointment is not yet made, dismisses him, and re-seats himself at the council. A moment after it breaks up. The King leaves to go to mass, sees Puyguilhem, and passes without saying anything to him. Puyguilhem, much astonished, waits all the rest of the day, and seeing that the promised declaration does not come, speaks of it to the King at night. The King replies to him that it cannot be yet, and that he will see; the ambiguity of the response, and the cold tone, alarm Puyguilhem; he is in favour with the ladies, and speaks the jargon of gallantry; he goes to Madame de Montespan, to whom he states his disquietude, and conjures her to put an end to it. She promises him wonders, and amuses him thus several days.

Tired of this, and not being able to divine whence comes his failure, he takes a resolution—incredible

if it was not attested by all the Court of that time. The King was in the habit of visiting Madame de Montespan in the afternoon, and of remaining with her some time. Puyguilhem was on terms of tender intimacy with one of the chambermaids of Madame de Montespan. She privately introduced him into the room where the King visited Madame de Montespan, and he secreted himself under the bed. In this position he was able to hear all the conversation that took place between the King and his mistress above, and he learned by it that it was Louvois who had ousted him; that the King was very angry at the secret having got wind, and had changed his resolution to avoid quarrels between the artillery and the war department; and, finally, that Madame de Montespan, who had promised him her good offices, was doing him all the harm she could. A cough, the least movement, the slightest accident, might have betrayed the foolhardy Puyguilhem, and then what would have become of him? These are things the recital of which takes the breath away, and terrifies at the same time.

Puyguilhem was more fortunate than prudent, and was not discovered. The King and his mistress at last closed their conversation; the King dressed himself again, and went to his own rooms. Madame de Montespan went away to her toilette, in order to prepare for the rehearsal of a ballet to which the King, the Queen, and all the Court were going. The chambermaid drew Puyguilhem from under the bed, and he went and glued himself against the door of Madame de Montespan's chamber.

When Madame de Montespan came forth, in order to go to the rehearsal of the ballet, he presented his hand to her, and asked her, with an air of gentleness and of respect, if he might flatter himself that she had deigned to think of him when with the King. She assured him that she had not failed, and enumerated services she had, she said, just rendered him. Here and there he credulously interrupted her with questions, the better to entrap her; then, drawing near her, he told her she was a liar, a hussy, a harlot, and repeated to her, word for word, her conversation with the King!

Madame de Montespan was so amazed that she had not strength enough to reply one word; with difficulty she reached the place she was going to, and with difficulty overcame and hid the trembling of her legs and of her whole body; so that upon arriving at the room where the rehearsal was to take place, she fainted. All the Court was already there. The King, in great fright, came to her; it was not without much trouble she was restored to herself. The same evening she related to the King what had just happened, never doubting it was the devil who had so promptly and so precisely informed Puyguilhem of all that she had said to the King. The King was extremely irritated at the insult Madame de Montespan had received, and was much troubled to divine how Puyguilhem had been so exactly and so suddenly instructed.

Puyguilhem, on his side, was furious at losing the artillery, so that the King and he were under strange constraint together. This could last only a few days.

Puyguilhem, with his *grandes entrées,* seized his opportunity, and had a private audience with the King. He spoke to him of the artillery, and audaciously summoned him to keep his word. The King replied that he was not bound by it, since he had given it under secrecy, which he (Puyguilhem) had broken.

Upon this Puyguilhem retreats a few steps, turns his back upon the King, draws his sword, breaks the blade of it with his foot, and cries out in fury, that he will never in his life serve a prince who has so shamefully broken his word. The King, transported with anger, performed in that moment the finest action perhaps of his life. He instantly turned round, opened the window, threw his cane outside, said he should be sorry to strike a man of quality, and left the room.

The next morning, Puyguilhem, who had not dared to show himself since, was arrested in his chamber, and conducted to the Bastille. He was an intimate friend of Guitz, favourite of the King, for whom his Majesty had created the post of grand master of the wardrobe. Guitz had the courage to speak to the King in favour of Puyguilhem, and to try and re-awaken the infinite liking he had conceived for the young Gascon. He succeeded so well in touching the King, by showing him that the refusal of such a grand post as the artillery had turned Puyguilhem's head, that his Majesty wished to make amends for this refusal. He offered the post of captain of the King's guards to Puyguilhem, who, seeing this incredible and prompt return of favour, re-assumed sufficient audacity to refuse it, flattering himself he

should thus gain a better appointment. The King was not discouraged. Guitz went and preached to his friend in the Bastille, and with great trouble made him agree to have the goodness to accept the King's offer. As soon as he had accepted it he left the Bastille, went and saluted the King, and took the oaths of his new post, selling that which he occupied in the dragoons.

He had in 1665 the government of Berry, at the death of Maréchal de Clerembault. I will not speak here of his adventures with Mademoiselle, which she herself so naïvely relates in her memoirs, or of his extreme folly in delaying his marriage with her (to which the King had consented), in order to have fine liveries, and get the marriage celebrated at the King's mass, which gave time to Monsieur (incited by M. le Prince) to make representations to the King, which induced him to retract his consent, breaking off thus the marriage. Mademoiselle made a terrible uproar, but Puyguilhem, who since the death of his father had taken the name of Comte de Lausun, made this great sacrifice with good grace, and with more wisdom than belonged to him. He had the company of the hundred gentlemen, with battle-axes, of the King's household, which his father had had, and he had just been made lieutenant-general.

Lausun was in love with Madame de Monaco, an intimate friend of Madame, and in all her intrigues. He was very jealous of her, and was not pleased with her. One summer's afternoon he went to Saint-Cloud, and found Madame and her Court seated upon the ground, enjoying the air, and Madame de Monaco

half lying down, one of her hands open and outstretched. Lausun played the gallant with the ladies, and turned round so neatly that he placed his heel in the palm of Madame de Monaco, made a pirouette there, and departed. Madame de Monaco had strength enough to utter no cry, no word!

A short time after he did worse. He learnt that the King was on intimate terms with Madame de Monaco, learnt also the hour at which Bontems, the valet, conducted her, enveloped in a cloak, by a back staircase, upon the landing-place of which was a door leading into the King's cabinet, and in front of it a private cabinet. Lausun anticipates the hour, and lies in ambush in the private cabinet, fastening it from within with a hook, and sees through the keyhole the King open the door of the cabinet, put the key outside (in the lock) and close the door again. Lausun waits a little, comes out of his hiding-place, listens at the door in which the King had just placed the key, locks it, and takes out the key, which he throws into the private cabinet, in which he again shuts himself up.

Some time after Bontems and the lady arrive. Much astonished not to find the key in the door of the King's cabinet, Bontems gently taps at the door several times, but in vain; finally so loudly does he tap that the King hears the sound. Bontems says he is there, and asks his Majesty to open, because the key is not in the door. The King replies that he has just put it there. Bontems looks on the ground for it, the King meanwhile trying to open the door from the inside, and finding it double-locked. Of course all three are much astonished and much an-

noyed; the conversation is carried on through the door, and they cannot determine how this accident has happened. The King exhausts himself in efforts to force the door, in spite of its being double-locked. At last they are obliged to say good-bye through the door, and Lausun, who hears every word they utter, and who sees them through the keyhole, laughs in his sleeve at their mishap with infinite enjoyment.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Lausun's Magnificence—Louvois Conspires against Him—He is Imprisoned — His Adventures at Pignerol — On what Terms He is Released—His Life Afterwards—Return to Court.

IN 1670 the King wished to make a triumphant journey with the ladies, under pretext of visiting his possessions in Flanders, accompanied by an army, and by all his household troops, so that the alarm was great in the Low Countries, which he took no pains to appease. He gave the command of all to Lausun, with the patent of army-general. Lausun performed the duties of his post with much intelligence, and with extreme gallantry and magnificence. This brilliancy, and this distinguished mark of favour, made Louvois, whom Lausun in no way spared, think very seriously. He united with Madame de Montespan (who had not pardoned the discovery Lausun had made, or the atrocious insults he had bestowed upon her), and the two worked so well that they re-awakened in the King's mind recollections of the broken sword, the refusal in the Bastille of the post of captain of the guards, and made his Majesty look upon Lausun as a man who no longer knew himself, who had suborned Mademoiselle until he had been within

an inch of marrying her, and of assuring to himself immense wealth; finally, as a man, very dangerous on account of his audacity, and who had taken it into his head to gain the devotion of the troops by his magnificence, his services to the officers, and by the manner in which he had treated him during the Flanders journey, making himself adored. They made him out criminal for having remained the friend of, and on terms of great intimacy with, the Comtesse de Soissons, driven from the Court and suspected of crimes. They must have accused Lausun also of crimes which I have never heard of, in order to procure for him the barbarous treatment they succeeded in subjecting him to.

Their intrigues lasted all the year, 1671, without Lausun discovering anything by the visage of the King, or that of Madame de Montespan. Both the King and his mistress treated him with their ordinary distinction and familiarity. He was a good judge of jewels (knowing also how to set them well), and Madame de Montespan often employed him in this capacity. One evening, in the middle of November, 1671, he arrived from Paris, where Madame de Montespan had sent him in the morning for some precious stones, and as he was about to enter his chamber he was arrested by the Maréchal de Rochefort, captain of the guards.

Lausun, in the utmost surprise, wished to know why, to see the King or Madame de Montespan—at least, to write to them; everything was refused him. He was taken to the Bastille, and shortly afterwards to Pignerol, where he was shut up in a low-roofed

dungeon. His post of captain of the body-guard was given to M. de Luxembourg, and the government of Berry to the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, who, at the death of Guitz, at the passage of the Rhine, 12th June, 1672, was made grand master of the wardrobe.

It may be imagined what was the state of a man like Lausun, precipitated, in a twinkling, from such a height to a dungeon in the château of Pignerol, without seeing anybody, and ignorant of his crime. He bore up, however, pretty well, but at last fell so ill that he began to think about confession. I have heard him relate that he feared a fictitious priest, and that, consequently, he obstinately insisted upon a Capuchin; and as soon as he came he seized him by the beard, and tugged at it as hard as he could, on all sides, in order to see that it was not a sham one! He was four or five years in his gaol. Prisoners find employment which necessity teaches them. There were prisoners above him and at the side of him. They found means to speak to him. This intercourse led them to make a hole, well hidden, so as to talk more easily; then to increase it, and visit each other.

The superintendent Fouquet had been enclosed near them ever since December, 1664. He knew by his neighbours (who had found means of seeing him) that Lausun was under them. Fouquet, who received no news, hoped for some from him, and had a great desire to see him. He had left Lausun a young man, dawning at the Court, introduced by the Maréchal de Grammont, well received at the house of the Comtesse de Soissons, which the King never quitted, and already looked upon favorably. The prisoners, who

had become intimate with Lausun, persuaded him to allow himself to be drawn up through their hole, in order to see Fouquet in their dungeon. Lausun was very willing. They met, and Lausun began relating, accordingly, his fortunes and his misfortunes, to Fouquet. The unhappy superintendent opened wide his ears and eyes when he heard this young Gascon (once only too happy to be welcomed and harboured by the Maréchal de Grammont) talk of having been general of dragoons, captain of the guards, with the patent and functions of army-general! Fouquet no longer knew where he was, believed Lausun mad, and that he was relating his visions, when he described how he had missed the artillery, and what had passed afterwards thereupon: but he was convinced that madness had reached its climax, and was afraid to be with Lausun, when he heard him talk of his marriage with Mademoiselle, agreed to by the King, how broken, and the wealth she had assured to him. This much curbed their intercourse, as far as Fouquet was concerned, for he, believing the brain of Lausun completely turned, took for fairy tales all the stories the Gascon told him of what had happened in the world, from the imprisonment of the one to the imprisonment of the other.

The confinement of Fouquet was a little relieved before that of Lausun. His wife and some officers of the château of Pignerol had permission to see him, and to tell him the news of the day. One of the first things he did was to tell them of this poor Puyguilhem, whom he had left young, and on a tolerably good footing for his age, at the Court, and whose

head was now completely turned, his madness hidden within the prison walls; but what was his astonishment when they all assured him that what he had heard was perfectly true! He did not return to the subject, and was tempted to believe them all mad together. It was some time before he was persuaded.

In his turn, Lausun was taken from his dungeon, and had a chamber, and soon after had the same liberty that had been given to Fouquet; finally, they were allowed to see each other as much as they liked. I have never known what displeased Lausun, but he left Pignerol the enemy of Fouquet, and did him afterwards all the harm he could, and after his death extended his animosity to his family.

During the long imprisonment of Lausun, Madame de Nogent, one of his sisters, took such care of his revenues that he left Pignerol extremely rich.

Mademoiselle, meanwhile, was inconsolable at this long and harsh imprisonment, and took all possible measures to deliver Lausun. The King at last resolved to turn this to the profit of the Duc du Maine, and to make Mademoiselle pay dear for the release of her lover. He caused a proposition to be made to her, which was nothing less than to assure to the Duc du Maine, and his posterity after her death, the countdom of Eû, the Duchy of Aumale, and the principality of Domfés! The gift was enormous, not only as regards the value, but the dignity and extent of these three slices. Moreover, she had given the first two to Lausun, with the Duchy of Saint-Forgeon, and the fine estate of Thiers, in Auvergne, when their marriage was broken off, and she would have been

obliged to make him renounce Eû and Aumale before she could have disposed of them in favour of the Duc du Maine. Mademoiselle could not make up her mind to this yoke, or to strip Lausun of such considerable benefits. She was importuned to the utmost, finally menaced by the ministers, now Louvois, now Colbert. With the latter she was better pleased, because he had always been on good terms with Lausun, and because he handled her more gently than Louvois, who, an enemy of her lover, always spoke in the harshest terms. Mademoiselle unceasingly felt that the King did not like her, and that he had never pardoned her the Orléans journey, still less her doings at the Bastille, when she fired its cannons upon the King's troops, and saved thus M. le Prince and his people, at the combat of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. Feeling, therefore, that the King, hopelessly estranged from her, and consenting to give liberty to Lausun only from his passion for elevating and enriching his bastards, would not cease to persecute her until she had consented—despairing of better terms, she agreed to the gift, with the most bitter tears and complaints. But it was found that, in order to make valid the renunciation of Lausun, he must be set at liberty, so that it was pretended he had need of the waters of Bourbon, and Madame de Montespan also, in order that they might confer together upon this affair.

Lausun was taken guarded to Bourbon by a detachment of musketeers, commanded by Maupertius. Lausun saw Madame de Montespan at Bourbon; but he was so indignant at the terms proposed to him as the condition of his liberty, that after long disputes he

would hear nothing more on the subject, and was reconducted to Pignerol as he had been brought.

This firmness did not suit the King, intent upon the fortune of his well-beloved bastard. He sent Madame de Nogent to Pignerol; then Borin (a friend of Lausun, and who was mixed up in all his affairs), with menaces and promises. Borin, with great trouble, obtained the consent of Lausun, and brought about a second journey to Bourbon for him and Madame de Montespan, with the same pretext of the waters. Lausun was conducted there as before, and never pardoned Maupertuis the severe pedantry of his exactitude. This last journey was made in the autumn of 1680. Lausun consented to everything. Madame de Montespan returned triumphant. Maupertuis and his musketeers took leave of Lausun at Bourbon, whence he had permission to go and reside at Angers; and immediately after, this exile was enlarged, so that he had the liberty of all Anjou and Lorraine. The consummation of the affair was deferred until the commencement of February, 1681, in order to give him a greater air of liberty. Thus Lausun had from Mademoiselle only Saint-Forgeon and Thiers, after having been on the point of marrying her, and of succeeding to all her immense wealth. The Duc du Maine was instructed to make his court to Mademoiselle, who always received him very coldly, and who saw him take her arms, with much vexation, as a mark of his gratitude, in reality for the sake of the honour it brought him; for the arms were those of Gaston, which the Comte de Toulouse afterwards took, not for the same reason, but under pretext of conformity with his brother; and they have handed them down to their children.

Lausun, who had been led to expect much more gentle treatment, remained four years in these two provinces, of which he grew as weary as was Mademoiselle at his absence. She cried out in anger against Madame de Montespan and her son; complained loudly that after having been so pitilessly fleeced, Lausun was still kept removed from her; and made such a stir that at last she obtained permission for him to return to Paris, with entire liberty; on condition, however, that he did not approach within two leagues of any place where the King might be.

Lausun came, therefore, to Paris, and assiduously visited his benefactors. The weariness of this kind of exile, although so softened, led him into high play, at which he was extremely successful; always a good and sure player, and very straightforward, he gained largely. Monsieur, who sometimes made little visits to Paris, and who played very high, permitted him to join the gambling parties of the Palais Royal, then those of Saint-Cloud. Lausun passed thus several years, gaining and lending much money very nobly; but the nearer he found himself to the Court, and to the great world, the more insupportable became to him the prohibition he had received.

Finally, being no longer able to bear it, he asked the King for permission to go to England, where high play was much in vogue. He obtained it, and took with him a good deal of money, which secured him an open-armed reception in London, where he was not less successful than in Paris.

James II., then reigning, received Lausun with distinction. But the Revolution was already brewing.

It burst after Lausun had been in England eight or ten months. It seemed made expressly for him, by the success he derived from it, as everybody is aware. James II., no longer knowing what was to become of him—betrayed by his favourites and his ministers, abandoned by all his nation, the Prince of Orange master of all hearts, the troops, the navy, and ready to enter London—the unhappy monarch confided to Lausun what he held most dear—the Queen and the Prince of Wales, whom Lausun happily conducted to Calais. The Queen at once despatched a courier to the King, in the midst of the compliments of which she insinuated that by the side of her joy at finding herself and her son in security under his protection, was her grief at not daring to bring with her him to whom she owed her safety.

The reply of the King, after much generous and gallant sentiment, was, that he shared this obligation with her, and that he hastened to show it to her, by restoring the Comte de Lausun to favour.

In effect, when the Queen presented Lausun to the King, in the Palace of Saint-Germains (where the King, with all the family and all the Court, came to meet her), he treated him as of old, gave him the privilege of the *grandes entrées*, and promised him a lodging at Versailles, which he received immediately after. From that day he always went to Marly, and to Fontainebleau, and, in fact, never after quitted the Court. It may be imagined what was the delight of such an ambitious courtier, so completely re-established in such a sudden and brilliant manner. He had also a lodging in the château of Saint-Germain, chosen as the resi-

dence of this fugitive Court, at which King James soon arrived.

Lausun, like a skilful courtier, made all possible use of the two Courts, and procured for himself many interviews with the King, in which he received minor commissions. Finally, he played his cards so well that the King permitted him to receive in Notre Dame, at Paris, the Order of the Garter, from the hands of the King of England, accorded to him at his second passage into Ireland the rank of lieutenant-general of his auxiliary army, and permitted at the same time that he should be of the staff of the King of England, who lost Ireland during the same campaign at the battle of the Boyne. He returned into France with the Comte de Lausun, for whom he obtained letters of the Duke, which were verified at the Parliament in May, 1692. What a miraculous return of fortune! But what a fortune, in comparison with that of marrying Mademoiselle, with the donation of all her prodigious wealth, and the title and dignity of Duke and Peer of Montpensier. What a monstrous pedestal! And with children by this marriage, what a flight might not Lausun have taken, and who can say where he might have arrived?

CHAPTER XXX.

Lausun Regrets His Former Favour—Means Taken to Recover It—Failure—Anecdotes—Biting Sayings—My Intimacy with Lausun—His Illness, Death, and Character.

I HAVE elsewhere related Lausun's humours, his notable wanton tricks, and his rare singularity. He enjoyed, during the rest of his long life, intimacy with the King, distinction at the Court, great consideration, extreme abundance, kept up the state of a great nobleman, with one of the most magnificent houses of the Court, and the best table, morning and evening, most honourably frequented, and at Paris the same, after the King's death. All this did not content him. He could only approach the King with outside familiarity; he felt that the mind and the heart of that monarch were on their guard against him, and in an estrangement that not all his art nor all his application could ever overcome. This is what made him marry my sister-in-law, hoping thus to re-establish himself in serious intercourse with the King by means of the army that M. le Maréchal de Lorge commanded in Germany; but his project failed, as has been seen. This is what made him bring about the marriage of the Duc de Lorge with the daughter

of Chamillart, in order to reinstate himself by means of that minister; but without success. This is what made him undertake the journey to Aix-la-Chapelle, under the pretext of the waters, to obtain information which might lead to private interviews with the King, respecting the peace; but he was again unsuccessful. All his projects failed; in fact, he unceasingly sorrowed, and believed himself in profound disgrace—even saying so. He left nothing undone in order to pay his court, at bottom with meanness, but externally with dignity; and he every year celebrated a sort of anniversary of his disgrace, by extraordinary acts, of which ill-humour and solitude were oftentimes absurdly the fruit. He himself spoke of it, and used to say that he was not rational at the annual return of this epoch, which was stronger than he. He thought he pleased the King by this refinement of attention, without perceiving he was laughed at.

By nature he was extraordinary in everything, and took pleasure in affecting to be more so, even at home, and among his valets. He counterfeited the deaf and the blind, the better to see and hear without exciting suspicion, and diverted himself by laughing at fools, even the most elevated, by holding with them a language which had no sense. His manners were measured, reserved, gentle, even respectful; and from his low and honeyed tongue came piercing remarks, overwhelming by their justice, their force, or their satire, composed of two or three words, perhaps, and sometimes uttered with an air of naïveté or of distraction, as though he was not thinking of what he said.

Thus he was feared, without exception, by everybody, and with many acquaintances he had few or no friends, although he merited them by his ardour in seeing everybody as much as he could, and by his readiness in opening his purse. He liked to gather together foreigners of any distinction, and perfectly did the honours of the Court. But devouring ambition poisoned his life; yet he was a very good and useful relative.

During the summer which followed the death of Louis XIV. there was a review of the King's household troops, led by M. le Duc d'Orléans, in the plain by the side of the Bois de Boulogne. Passy, where M. de Lausun had a pretty house, is on the other side. Madame de Lausun was there with company, and I slept there the evening before the review. Madame de Poitiers, a young widow, and one of our relatives, was there too, and was dying to see the review, like a young person who has seen nothing, but who dares not show herself in public in the first months of her mourning.

How she could be taken was discussed in the company, and it was decided that Madame de Lausun could conduct her a little way, buried in her carriage. In the midst of the gaiety of this party, M. de Lausun arrived from Paris, where he had gone in the morning. He was told what had just been decided. As soon as he learnt it he flew into a fury, was no longer master of himself, broke off the engagement, almost foaming at the mouth; said the most disagreeable things to his wife in the strongest, the harshest, the most insulting, and the most

foolish terms. She gently wept; Madame de Poitiers sobbed outright, and all the company felt the utmost embarrassment. The evening appeared an age, and the saddest refectory repast a gay meal by the side of our supper. He was wild in the midst of the profoundest silence; scarcely a word was said. He quitted the table, as usual, at the fruit, and went to bed. An attempt was made to say something afterwards by way of relief, but Madame de Lausun politely and wisely stopped the conversation, and brought out cards in order to turn the subject.

The next morning I went to M. de Lausun, in order to tell him in plain language my opinion of the scene of the previous evening. I had not the time. As soon as he saw me enter he extended his arms, and cried that I saw a madman, who did not deserve my visit, but an asylum; passed the strongest eulogies upon his wife (which assuredly she merited), said he was not worthy of her, and that he ought to kiss the ground upon which she walked; overwhelmed himself with blame; then, with tears in his eyes, said he was more worthy of pity than of anger; that he must admit to me all his shame and misery; that he was more than eighty years of age; that he had neither children nor survivors; that he had been captain of the guards; that though he might be so again, he should be incapable of the function; that he unceasingly said this to himself, and that yet with all this he could not console himself for having been so no longer during the many years since he had lost his post; that he had never been able to draw the dagger from his heart; that everything which recalled the

memory of the past made him beside himself, and that to hear that his wife was going to take Madame de Poitiers to see a review of the body-guards, in which he now counted for nothing, had turned his head, and had rendered him wild to the extent I had seen; that he no longer dared show himself before any one after this evidence of madness; that he was going to lock himself up in his chamber, and that he threw himself at my feet in order to conjure me to go and find his wife, and try to induce her to take pity on and pardon a senseless old man, who was dying with grief and shame. This admission, so sincere and so dolorous to make, penetrated me. I sought only to console him and compose him. The reconciliation was not difficult; we drew him from his chamber, not without trouble, and he evinced during several days as much disinclination to show himself, as I was told, for I went away in the evening, my occupations keeping me very busy.

I have often reflected, apropos of this, upon the extreme misfortune of allowing ourselves to be carried away by the intoxication of the world, and into the formidable state of an ambitious man, whom neither riches nor comfort, neither dignity acquired nor age, can satisfy, and who, instead of tranquilly enjoying what he possesses, and appreciating the happiness of it, exhausts himself in regrets, and in useless and continual bitterness. But we die as we have lived, and 'tis rare it happens otherwise. This madness respecting the captaincy of the guards so cruelly dominated M. de Lausun, that he often dressed himself in a blue coat, with silver lace, which, without being ex-

actly the uniform of the captain of the body-guards, resembled it closely, and would have rendered him ridiculous if he had not accustomed people to it, made himself feared, and risen above all ridicule.

With all his scheming and cringing he fell foul of everybody, always saying some biting remark with dove-like gentleness. Ministers, generals, fortunate people and their families, were the most ill-treated. He had, as it were, usurped the right of saying and doing what he pleased; nobody daring to be angry with him. The Grammonts alone were excepted. He always remembered the hospitality and the protection he had received from them at the outset of his life. He liked them; he interested himself in them; he was in respect before them. Old Comte Grammont took advantage of this and revenged the Court by the sallies he constantly made against Lausun, who never returned them or grew angry, but gently avoided him. He always did a good deal for the children of his sisters.

During the plague the Bishop of Marseilles had much signalised himself by wealth spent and danger incurred. When the plague had completely passed away, M. de Lausun asked M. le Duc d'Orléans for an abbey for the Bishop. The Regent gave away some livings soon after, and forgot M. de Marseilles. Lausun pretended to be ignorant of it, and asked M. le Duc d'Orléans if he had had the goodness to remember him. The Regent was embarrassed. The Duc de Lausun, as though to relieve him from his embarrassment, said, in a gentle and respectful tone, "Monsieur, he will do better another time," and with

this sarcasm rendered the Regent dumb, and went away smiling. The story got abroad, and M. le Duc d'Orléans repaired his forgetfulness by the bishopric of Laon, and upon the refusal of M. de Marseilles to change, gave him a fat abbey.

M. de Lausun hindered also a promotion of Marshal of France by the ridicule he cast upon the candidates. He said to the Regent, with that gentle and respectful tone he knew so well how to assume, that in case any useless Marshals of France (as he said) were made, he begged his Royal Highness to remember that he was the oldest lieutenant-general of the realm, and that he had had the honour of commanding armies with the patent of general. I have elsewhere related other of his witty remarks. He could not keep them in; envy and jealousy urged him to utter them, and as his bon-mots always went straight to the point, they were always much repeated.

We were on terms of continual intimacy; he had rendered me real solid friendly services of himself, and I paid him all sorts of respectful attentions, and he paid me the same. Nevertheless, I did not always escape his tongue; and on one occasion, he was perhaps within an inch of doing me much injury by it.

The King (Louis XIV.) was declining; Lausun felt it, and began to think of the future. Few people were in favour with M. le Duc d'Orléans; nevertheless, it was seen that his grandeur was approaching. All eyes were upon him, shining with malignity, consequently upon me, who for a long time had been the sole courtier who remained publicly attached to him, the sole in his confidence. M. de Lausun came to dine at my house,

and found us at table. The company he saw apparently displeased him; for he went away to Torcy, with whom I had no intimacy, and who was also at table, with many people opposed to M. le Duc d'Orléans, Tallard, among others, and Tessé.

"Monsieur," said Lausun to Torcy, with a gentle and timid air, familiar to him, "take pity upon me, I have just tried to dine with M. de Saint-Simon. I found him at table, with company; I took care not to sit down with them, as I did not wish to be the *zeste* of the cabal. I have come here to find one."

They all burst out laughing. The remark instantly ran over all Versailles. Madame de Maintenon and M. du Maine at once heard it, and nevertheless no sign was anywhere made. To have been angry would only have been to spread it wider: I took the matter as the scratch of an ill-natured cat, and did not allow Lausun to perceive that I knew it.

Two or three years before his death he had an illness which reduced him to extremity. We were all very assiduous, but he would see none of us, except Madame de Saint-Simon, and her but once. Languet, curé of Saint-Sulpice, often went to him, and discoursed most admirably to him. One day, when he was there, the Duc de la Force glided into the chamber: M. de Lausun did not like him at all, and often laughed at him. He received him tolerably well, and continued to talk aloud with the curé.

Suddenly he turned to the curé, complimented and thanked him, said he had nothing more valuable to give him than his blessing, drew his arm from the bed, pronounced the blessing, and gave it to him. Then

turning to the Duc de la Force, Lausun said he had always loved and respected him as the head of his house, and that as such he asked him for his blessing. These two men, the curé and the Duc de la Force, were astonished, could not utter a word. The sick man redoubled his instances. M. de la Force, recovering himself, found the thing so amusing, that he gave his blessing; and in fear lest he should explode, left the room, and came to us in the adjoining chamber, bursting with laughter, and scarcely able to relate what had happened to him.

A moment after, the curé came also, all abroad, but smiling as much as possible, so as to put a good face on the matter. Lausun knew that he was ardent and skilful in drawing money from people for the building of a church, and had often said he would never fall into his net; he suspected that the worthy curé's assiduities had an interested motive, and laughed at him in giving him only his blessing (which he ought to have received from him), and in perseveringly asking the Duc de la Force for his. The curé, who saw the point of the joke, was much mortified, but, like a sensible man, he was not less frequent in his visits to M. de Lausun after this; but the patient cut short his visits, and would not understand the language he spoke.

Another day, while he was still very ill, Biron and his wife made bold to enter his room on tiptoe, and kept behind his curtains, out of sight, as they thought; but he perceived them by means of the glass on the chimney-piece. Lausun liked Biron tolerably well, but Madame Biron not at all; she was, nevertheless, his niece, and his principal heiress; he thought her mercenary, and

all her manners insupportable to him. In that he was like the rest of the world. He was shocked by this unscrupulous entrance into his chamber, and felt that, impatient for her inheritance, she came in order to make sure of it, if he should die directly. He wished to make her repent of this, and to divert himself at her expense. He begins, therefore, to utter aloud, as though believing himself alone, an ejaculatory orison, asking pardon of God for his past life, expressing himself as though persuaded his death was nigh, and saying that, grieved at his inability to do penance, he wishes at least to make use of all the wealth he possesses, in order to redeem his sins, and bequeath that wealth to the hospitals without any reserve; says it is the sole road to salvation left to him by God, after having passed a long life without thinking of the future; and thanks God for this sole resource left him, which he adopts with all his heart!

He accompanied this resolution with a tone so touched, so persuaded, so determined, that Biron and his wife did not doubt for a moment he was going to execute his design, or that they should be deprived of all the succession. They had no desire to spy any more, and went, confounded, to the Duchesse de Lausun, to relate to her the cruel decree they had just heard pronounced, conjuring her to try and moderate it. Thereupon the patient sent for the notaries, and Madame Biron believed herself lost. It was exactly the design of the testator to produce this idea. He made the notaries wait; then allowed them to enter, and dictated his will, which was a death-blow to Madame de Biron. Nevertheless, he delayed signing it, and finding himself better and better, did not sign it at all. He was much

diverted with this farce, and could not restrain his laughter at it, when re-established. Despite his age, and the gravity of his illness, he was promptly cured and restored to his usual health.

He was internally as strong as a lion, though externally very delicate. He dined and supped very heartily every day of an excellent and very delicate cheer, always with good company, evening and morning; eating of everything, *gras* and *maigre,* with no choice except that of his taste and no moderation. He took chocolate in the morning, and had always on the table the fruits in season, and biscuits; at other times beer, cider, lemonade, and other similar drinks iced; and as he passed to and fro, ate and drank at this table every afternoon, exhorting others to do the same. In this way he left table or the fruit, and immediately went to bed.

I recollect that once, among others, he ate at my house, after his illness, so much fish, vegetables, and all sorts of things (I having no power to hinder him), that in the evening we quietly sent to learn whether he had not felt the effects of them. He was found at table eating with good appetite.

His gallantry was long faithful to him. Mademoiselle was jealous of it, and that often controlled him. I have heard Madame de Fontenelles (a very enviable woman, of much intelligence, very truthful, and of singular virtue), I have heard her say, that being at Eû with Mademoiselle, M. de Lausun came there and could not desist from running after the girls; Mademoiselle knew it, was angry, scratched him, and drove him from her presence. The Comtesse de Fiesque recon-

ciled them. Mademoiselle appeared at the end of a long gallery; Lausun was at the other end, and he traversed the whole length of it on his knees until he reached the feet of Mademoiselle. These scenes, more or less moving, often took place afterwards. Lausun allowed himself to be beaten, and in his turn soundly beat Mademoiselle; and this happened several times, until at last, tired of each other, they quarrelled once for all and never saw each other again; he kept several portraits of her, however, in his house or upon him, and never spoke of her without much respect. Nobody doubted they had been secretly married. At her death he assumed a livery almost black, with silver lace; this he changed into white with a little blue upon gold, when silver was prohibited upon liveries.

His temper, naturally scornful and capricious, rendered more so by prison and solitude, had made him a recluse and dreamer; so that having in his house the best of company, he left them to Madame de Lausun, and withdrew alone all the afternoon, several hours running, almost always without books, for he read only a few works of fancy—a very few—and without sequence; so that he knew nothing except what he had seen, and until the last was exclusively occupied with the Court and the news of the great world. I have a thousand times regretted his radical incapacity to write down what he had seen and done. It would have been a treasure of the most curious anecdotes, but he had no perseverance, no application. I have often tried to draw from him some morsels. Another misfortune. He began to relate; in the recital names occurred of people who had taken part in what he wished to relate.

He instantly quitted the principal object of the story in order to hang on to one of these persons, and immediately after to some other person connected with the first, then to a third, in the manner of the romances; he threaded through a dozen histories at once, which made him lose ground and drove him from one to the other without ever finishing anything; and with this his words were very confused, so that it was impossible to learn anything from him or retain anything he said. For the rest, his conversation was always constrained by caprice or policy; and was amusing only by starts, and by the malicious witticisms which sprung out of it. A few months after his last illness, that is to say, when he was more than ninety years of age, he broke in his horses and made a hundred *passades* at the Bois de Boulogne (before the King, who was going to the Muette), upon a colt he had just trained, surprising the spectators by his address, his firmness, and his grace. These details about him might go on for ever.

His last illness came on without warning, almost in a moment, with the most horrible of all ills, a cancer in the mouth. He endured it to the last with incredible patience and firmness, without complaint, without spleen, without the slightest repining; he was insupportable to himself. When he saw his illness somewhat advanced, he withdrew into a little apartment (which he had hired with this object in the interior of the Convent of the Petits Augustins, into which there was an entrance from his house) to die in repose there, inaccessible to Madame de Biron and every other woman, except his wife, who had permission to go in at all hours, followed by one of her attendants.

Into this retreat Lausun gave access only to his nephews and brothers-in-law, and to them as little as possible. He thought only of profiting by his terrible state, of giving all his time to the pious discourses of his confessor and of some of the pious people of the house, and to holy reading; to everything, in fact, which best could prepare him for death. When we saw him, no disorder, nothing lugubrious, no trace of suffering,—politeness, tranquillity, conversation but little animated, indifference to what was passing in the world, speaking of it little and with difficulty; little or no morality, still less talk of his state; and this uniformity, so courageous and so peaceful, was sustained full four months until the end; but during the last ten or twelve days he would see neither brothers-in-law nor nephews, and as for his wife, promptly dismissed her. He received all the sacraments very edifyingly, and preserved his senses to the last moment. The morning of the day during the night of which he died, he sent for Biron, said he had done for him all that Madame de Lausun had wished; that by his testament he gave him all his wealth, except a trifling legacy to the son of his other sister, and some recompenses to his domestics; that all he had done for him since his marriage, and what he did in dying, he (Biron) entirely owed to Madame de Lausun; that he must never forget the gratitude he owed her; that he prohibited him, by the authority of uncle and testator, ever to cause her any trouble or annoyance, or to have any process against her, no matter of what kind. It was Biron himself who told me this the next day, in the terms I have given. M. de Lausun said adieu to him in a firm tone, and dismissed him.

He prohibited, and reasonably, all ceremony; he was buried at the Petits Augustins; he had nothing from the King but the ancient company of the battle-axes, which was suppressed two days after. A month before his death he had sent for Dillon (charged here with the affairs of King James, and a very distinguished officer general) to whom he surrendered his collar of the Order of the Garter, and a George of onyx, encircled with perfectly beautiful and large diamonds, to be sent back to the prince.

I perceive at last, that I have been very prolix upon this man, but the extraordinary singularity of his life, and my close connexion with him, appear to me sufficient excuses for making him known, especially as he did not sufficiently figure in general affairs to expect much notice in the histories that will appear. Another sentiment has extended my recital. I am drawing near a term I fear to reach, because my desires cannot be in harmony with the truth; they are ardent, consequently painful, because the other sentiment is terrible, and cannot in any way be palliated; the terror of arriving there has stopped me—nailed me where I was—frozen me.

It will easily be seen that I speak of the death (and what a death!) of M. le Duc d'Orléans; and this frightful recital, especially after such a long attachment (it lasted all his life, and will last all mine), penetrates me with terror and with grief for him. The Regent had said, when he died he should like to die suddenly: I shudder to my very marrow, with the horrible suspicion that God, in His anger, granted his desire.

CHAPTER XXXI.

Ill-Health of the Regent—My Fears—He Desires a Sudden Death — Apoplectic Fit — Death — His Successor as Prime Minister—The Duc de Chartres—End of the Memoirs.

THE new château of Meudon, completely furnished, had been restored to me since the return of the Court to Versailles, just as I had had it before the Court came to Meudon. The Duc and Duchesse d'Humières were with us there, and good company. One morning towards the end of October, 1723, the Duc d'Humières wished me to conduct him to Versailles, to thank M. le Duc d'Orléans.

We found the Regent dressing in the vault he used as his wardrobe. He was upon his chair among his valets, and one or two of his principal officers. His look terrified me. I saw a man with hanging head, a purple-red complexion, and a heavy stupid air. He did not even see me approach. His people told him. He slowly turned his head towards me, and asked me with a thick tongue what brought me. I told him. I had intended to pass him to come into the room where he dressed himself, so as not to keep the Duc d'Humières waiting; but I was so astonished that I stood stock still.

I took Siniane, first gentleman of his chamber, into

a window, and testified to him my surprise and my fear at the state in which I saw M. le Duc d'Orléans.

Simiane replied that for a long time he had been so in the morning; that to-day there was nothing extraordinary about him, and that I was surprised simply because I did not see him at those hours; that nothing would be seen when he had shaken himself a little in dressing. There was still, however, much to be seen when he came to dress himself. The Regent received the thanks of the Duc d'Humières with an astonished and heavy air; he who always was so gracious and so polite to everybody, and who so well knew how to express himself, scarcely replied to him! A moment after, M. d'Humières and I withdrew. We dined with the Duc de Gesvres, who led him to the King to thank his Majesty.

The condition of M. le Duc d'Orléans made me make many reflections. For a very long time the Secretaries of State had told me that during the first hours of the morning they could have made him pass anything they wished, or sign what might have been the most hurtful to him. It was the fruit of his suppers. Within the last year he himself had more than once told me that Chirac doctored him unceasingly, without effect; because he was so full that he sat down to table every evening without hunger, without any desire to eat, though he took nothing in the morning, and simply a cup of chocolate between one and two o'clock in the day (before everybody), it being then the time to see him in public. I had not kept dumb with him thereupon, but all my representations were perfectly useless. I knew moreover, that Chirac had continually told him

that the habitual continuance of his suppers would lead him to apoplexy, or dropsy on the chest, because his respiration was interrupted at times; upon which he had cried out against this latter malady, which was a slow, suffocating, annoying preparation for death, saying that he preferred apoplexy, which surprised and which killed at once, without allowing time to think of it!

Another man, instead of crying out against this kind of death with which he was menaced, and of preferring another, allowing him no time for reflection, would have thought about leading a sober, healthy, and decent life, which, with the temperament he had, would have procured him a very long time, exceeding agreeable in the situation—very probably durable—in which he found himself; but such was the double blindness of this unhappy prince.

I was on terms of much intimacy with M. de Fréjus, and since, in default of M. le Duc d'Orléans, there must be another master besides the King, until he could take command, I preferred this prelate to any other. I went to him, therefore, and told him what I had seen this morning of the state of M. le Duc d'Orléans. I predicted that his death must soon come, and that it would arrive suddenly, without warning. I counselled Fréjus, therefore, to have all his arrangements ready with the King, in order to fill up the Regent's place of prime minister when it should become vacant. M. de Fréjus appeared very grateful for the advice, but was measured and modest as though he thought the post much above him!

On the 22nd of December, 1723, I went from Meudon

to Versailles to see M. le Duc d'Orléans; I was three-quarters of an hour with him in his cabinet, where I had found him alone. We walked to and fro there, talking of affairs of which he was going to give an account to the King that day. I found no difference in him, his state was, as usual, languid and heavy, as it had been for some time, but his judgment was clear as ever. I immediately returned to Meudon, and chatted there some time with Madame de Saint-Simon on arriving. On account of the season we had little company. I left Madame de Saint-Simon in her cabinet, and went into mine.

About an hour after, at most, I heard cries and a sudden uproar. I ran out and I found Madame de Saint-Simon quite terrified, bringing to me a groom of the Marquis de Ruffec, who wrote to me from Versailles, that M. le Duc d'Orléans was in an apoplectic fit. I was deeply moved, but not surprised; I had expected it, as I have shown, for a long time. I impatiently waited for my carriage, which was a long while coming, on account of the distance of the new château from the stables. I flung myself inside, and was driven as fast as possible.

At the park gate I met another courier from M. de Ruffec, who stopped me, and said it was all over. I remained there more than half an hour absorbed in grief and reflection. At the end I resolved to go to Versailles, and shut myself up in my rooms; I learnt there the particulars of the event.

M. le Duc d'Orléans had everything prepared to go and work with the King. While waiting the hour, he chatted with Madame Falari, one of his mistresses.

They were close to each other, both seated in arm-chairs, when suddenly he fell against her, and never from that moment had the slightest glimmer of consciousness.

La Falari, frightened as much as may be imagined, cried with all her might for help, and redoubled her cries. Seeing that nobody replied, she supported as best she could this poor prince upon the contiguous arms of the two chairs, ran into the grand cabinet, into the chamber, into the ante-chambers, without finding a soul; finally, into the court and the lower gallery. It was the hour at which M. le Duc d'Orléans worked with the King, an hour when people were sure no one would come and see him, and that he had no need of them, because he ascended to the King's room by the little staircase from his vault, that is to say his wardrobe. At last La Falari found somebody, and sent the first who came to hand for help. Chance, or rather providence, had arranged this sad event at a time when everybody was ordinarily away upon business or visits, so that a full half-hour elapsed before doctor or surgeon appeared, and about as long before any domestics of M. le Duc d'Orléans could be found.

As soon as the faculty had examined the Regent, they judged his case hopeless. He was hastily extended upon the floor, and bled, but he gave not the slightest sign of life, do what they might to him. In an instant, after the first announcement, everybody flocked to the spot; the great and the little cabinet were full of people. In less than two hours all was over, and little by little the solitude became as great as the crowd had been. As soon as assistance came, La Falari flew away and gained Paris as quickly as possible.

La Vrillière was one of the first who learnt of the attack of apoplexy. He instantly ran and informed the King and the Bishop of Fréjus. Then M. le Duc, like a skilful courtier, resolved to make the best of his time; he at once ran home and drew up at all hazards the patent appointing M. le Duc prime minister, thinking it probable that that prince would be named. Nor was he deceived. At the first intelligence of apoplexy, Fréjus proposed M. le Duc to the King, having probably made his arrangements in advance. M. le Duc arrived soon after, and entered the cabinet where he saw the King, looking very sad, his eyes red and tearful.

Scarcely had he entered than Fréjus said aloud to the King, that in the loss he had sustained by the death of M. le Duc d'Orléans (whom he very briefly eulogised), his Majesty could not do better than beg M. le Duc, there present, to charge himself with everything, and accept the post of prime minister M. le Duc d'Orléans had filled. The King, without saying a word, looked at Fréjus, and consented by a sign of the head, and M. le Duc uttered his thanks.

La Vrillière, transported with joy at the prompt policy he had followed, had in his pocket the form of an oath taken by the prime minister, copied from that taken by M. le Duc d'Orléans, and proposed to Fréjus to administer it immediately. Fréjus proposed it to the King as a fitting thing, and M. le Duc instantly took it. Shortly after, M. le Duc went away; the crowd in the adjoining rooms augmented his suite, and in a moment nothing was talked of but M. le Duc.

M. le Duc de Chartres (the Regent's son), very awkward, but a libertine, was at Paris with an opera dancer

he kept. He received the courier which brought him the news of the apoplexy, and on the road (to Versailles), another with the news of death. Upon descending from his coach, he found no crowd, but simply the Duc de Noailles, and De Guiche, who very *apertement* offered him their services, and all they could do for him. He received them as though they were begging-messengers whom he was in a hurry to get rid of, bolted upstairs to his mother, to whom he said he had just met two men who wished to bamboozle him, but that he had not been such a fool as to let them. This remarkable evidence of intelligence, judgment, and policy, promised at once all that this prince has since performed. It was with much trouble he was made to comprehend that he had acted with gross stupidity; he continued, nevertheless, to act as before.

He was not less of a cub in the interview I shortly afterwards had with him. Feeling it my duty to pay a visit of condolence to Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans, although I had not been on terms of intimacy with her for a long while, I sent a message to her to learn whether my presence would be agreeable. I was told that Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans would be very glad to see me. I accordingly immediately went to her.

I found her in bed, with a few ladies and her chief officers around, and M. le Duc de Chartres making decorum do double duty for grief. As soon as I approached her she spoke to me of the grievous misfortune—not a word of our private differences. I had stipulated thus. M. le Duc de Chartres went away to his own rooms. Our dragging conversation I put an end to as soon as possible.

From Madame la Duchesse d'Orléans I went to M. le Duc de Chartres. He occupied the room his father had used before being Regent. They told me he was engaged. I went again three times during the same morning. At the last his *valet de chambre* was ashamed, and apprised him of my visit, in despite of me. He came across the threshold of the door of his cabinet, where he had been occupied with some very common people; they were just the sort of people suited to him.

I saw a man before me stupefied and dumfounded, not afflicted, but so embarrassed that he knew not where he was. I paid him the strongest, the clearest, the most energetic of compliments, in a loud voice. He took me, apparently, for some repetition of the Ducs de Guiche and de Noailles, and did not do me the honour to reply one word.

I waited some moments, and seeing that nothing would come out of the mouth of this image, I made my reverence and withdrew, he advancing not one step to conduct me, as he ought to have done all along his apartment, but re-burying himself in his cabinet. It is true that in retiring I cast my eyes upon the company, right and left, who appeared to me much surprised. I went home very weary of dancing attendance at the château.

The death of M. le Duc d'Orléans made a great sensation abroad and at home; but foreign countries rendered him incomparably more justice, and regretted him much more, than the French. Although foreigners knew his feebleness, and although the English had strangely abused it, their experience had not the less

persuaded them of the range of his mind, of the greatness of his genius and of his views, of his singular penetration, of the sagacity and address of his policy, of the fertility of his expedients and of his resources, of the dexterity of his conduct under all changes of circumstances and events, of his clearness in considering objects and combining things; of his superiority over his ministers, and over those that various powers sent to him; of the exquisite discernment he displayed in investigating affairs; of his learned ability in immediately replying to everything when he wished. The majority of our Court did not regret him, however. The life he had led displeased the Church people; but more still, the treatment they had received from his hands.

The day after death, the corpse of M. le Duc d'Orléans was taken from Versailles to Saint-Cloud, and the next day the ceremonies commenced. His heart was carried from Saint-Cloud to the Val de Grace by the Archbishop of Rouen, chief almoner of the defunct Prince. The burial took place at Saint-Denis, the funeral procession passing through Paris, with the greatest pomp. The obsequies were delayed until the 12th of February. M. le Duc de Chartres became Duc d'Orléans.

After this event, I carried out a determination I had long resolved on. I appeared before the new masters of the realm as seldom as possible—only, in fact, upon such occasions where it would have been inconsistent with my position to stop away. My situation at the Court had totally changed. The loss of the dear Prince, the Duc de Bourgogne, was the first blow I had received. The loss of the Regent was the second. But what a wide gulf separated these two men!

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